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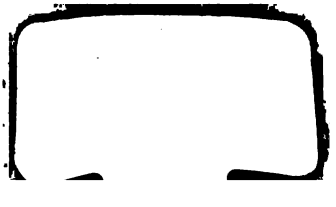

TRAVELLING

SKETCHES

IN

RUSSIA AND SWEDEN.

DURING THE YEARS

1805, 1806, 1807, 1808.

BY ROBERT KER PORTER.

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PREFACE.

THE author of the following pages, while relinquishing them for the press, felt a thousand hesitations whether or not to commit himself so far to the mercy of the world, as to submit a simple familiar correspondence to its eyes.

He had engaged to accompany the drawings* in this work with some explanations, and a general sketch of the manners and customs of the people who form their subjects. There was matter in these letters to furnish what was required; but the peculiar circumstances of the writer on his return to England, finding the friend to whom they had been addressed dying, would not allow him leisure nor spirits to throw them into any other shape. Hence the work appears with every imperfection; and three immovable ones, he fears, are prominent: continual egotism, an appearance of ostentation, and perhaps a too unreserved disclosure of his own situation and feelings.

To such charges, the fact must reply—As these pages were originally written in the free intercourse of confidence, the writer naturally mentioned himself as going hither or thither, or being engaged in such and such scenes. He also did not hesitate to acknowledge the kindnesses he received from persons of all ranks; and so, perhaps, by giving way to gratitude,

* The American publishers of these travels omit the drawings referred to, because the time and expense necessary to procure them would greatly exceed the limits required; and because they are not an *indispensable*, though elegant appendage to the work.

he may incur the suspicion of vanity. For allowing his heart to be so frequently seen, he can only repeat the same apology: he wrote to a friend! to one who had shared his thoughts for many years; to one whose merits were, like his misfortunes, infinite; and whose youth has sunk blighted to the grave. Captain Henry Caulfield was this friend: and thus to mention him, is, alas! a poor tribute of respect which affection dictates, and sorrow renders sacred.

On looking over these pages, the writer found the domestic sentiments so interwoven with the general subjects, that he could not separate them without recomposing the whole. This he had not time to do: and as he has by the peculiarities of his fate, been already so brought before the eye of the public that his history is not only well known, but his feelings more than guessed at, he thought it best to submit himself at once to its indulgence, and let the letters go forth even in their original simplicity.

Hence, it is not the studied work of an author bringing forward deep researches, valuable discoveries, and consequential observations, that is now laid before the public, but the familiar correspondence of a friend, noticing the manners of the people with whom he associates, their fashions, their amusements, the sentiments of the day; and mingling with these a few occurrences happening to himself, and the reflections to which they give rise.

Such then is this work, merely Travelling Sketches: as sketches, he trusts a candid public will consider them; and not pretending to have done more, he hopes his readers will judge him by his pretensions, and not withhold the indulgence he requires.

ROBERT KER PORTER.

London, March, 1809.

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TRAVELLING SKETCHES

IN

RUSSIA AND SWEDEN.

LETTER I.

St. Petersburgh, September, 1805.

MY DEAR FRIEND,

As your "mind's eye" has ever followed me in all my travels, whether through the forests of Germany or the gardens of France, in these more distant regions I shall still wish for the same companion; and feel each pleasure doubled, when I think that in idea you accompany me, and enjoy, as myself, the interesting varieties of this vast empire. I am now safely arrived at the imperial residence of Russia. But as the road to it was not quite so "flat and unprofitable" as most of the ways in this world, I must lead you through the Sound before I present you at St. Petersburgh.

On the 29th of August, 1805, I embarked on board the Almeria bound to Cronstadt. The wind setting fair, I bade a short adieu to my country and all in it that I held dear; a foreign land was before me, fraught with ten thousand objects to interest the mind; and forgetting the pains of parting in the joys of expected return, I surrendered all my thoughts to the happy future. The weather continuing favourable, not many days elapsed before I saw the shores of Old England gradually disappear, and those of Denmark rise along the horizon. The next morning we cast anchor at Elsineur.

You may be well assured that my impatience to get on shore was much increased by the meditations which occupied me as the ship drew near a city which had been immortalized by the

pen of our matchless Shakspeare. The lapse of ages and the fables of the poet, were all lost in the reality of his painting: the moment of his scene seemed present with me; and eager to traverse every part of this consecrated ground, I had already followed Hamlet every where. I had measured the deep shadows of the platform, encountered the gray ghost of the Royal Dane, had killed Polonius in the Queen's closet, and drowned poor Ophelia in the willowed stream! With my fancy thus raised I stepped into a boat, and soon reached the pier-head of this memorable and once regal city. But "what a falling off was there!" Wapping possesses the splendor of ancient Rome, when compared with the modern aspect of Elsineur. Judge then how soon my eye and mind were called back to the narrow footpaths of dull matter-o'-fact; but you cannot judge, for you cannot imagine, how much more rapidly I was made to forget the sweet-scented flowers of the "pretty Ophelia," in the *haut gouts* which now assailed my senses. The weather being hot, various effluvia and exhalations sported about so pestiferously, that it was impossible to proceed without the shield of a handkerchief to the nose, if you wished to prevent actual sickness: which accident, by the by, would be considered of little consequence; as small ceremony is used here, either as to time, place, or opportunity, in making every addition to this Augean repository. The immortal scavenger of Elis would certainly be at his labour now had he begun at Elsineur: I found it a sufficiently Herculean toil to wade through this wilderness of filth. In vain I sought for decayed battlements and mouldering towers; not a single vestige presented itself that bore the smallest trace of this town ever having been hallowed by the mausoleum of an Ophelia, or proudly decorated with the stately walls of a royal palace. However, as Balbeck, for want of proper investigation, lay hidden many centuries in the desert; so might all I wished to see, be yet lurking in some unexplored spot: my ignorance might be my only impediment. To get rid of this, I looked about for an informer; and exerting the key to such knowledge, soon found a clue to the labyrinth; which led me to a place, a mile from the town, that bears the name of Hamlet's Garden.

I entered a gateway which opened to a walk well shaded with lofty trees. Striking into this avenue, I momentarily expected to be gratified by the appearance of venerable and magnificent ruins. Ruins did appear; but alas, it was a *Satyr to Hyperion!* a modern wretched building, even in youth tumbling to decay! It was easily to be discerned that the fabric and the gardens were of the same date; and retained no relic of ancient interest, excepting the tradition, which affirms that to be the spot where once stood the Danish palace; and where was enacted that tragedy, which has been so gloriously immortalized by the genius of our great dramatic bard. Admitting this tradition to be fact, the mind then looks through what is, to what was, and once more ennobles the scene. In this temper then, I shall describe its degenerated aspect; and the natural beauties of its situation, which, being stamped by the Creator himself, neither time nor depraved taste has had power to alter.

The present edifice is erected on the brow of a gently rising hill; the summit of which is gained by means of a winding walk cut through a small shrubbery. Not being more entertained with the near than the distant view of this sorry representative of the royal Hamlet's abode, I turned to the surrounding prospect. The town of Elsineur on the plain beneath, presents itself ill-built, red, and without any public building, or spire, to vary its sameness. Far to the left of the city stands the castle of Kronenberg, a bold and fine feature. The waves of the Cattegut roll at its feet; and are bounded on the opposite side, by the Swedish coast. Four hundred sail of merchant ships were lying there at anchor, which added greatly to the interest of the picture. I made a sketch on the spot, to which I refer you; and as I go on with my description you can follow me with your eye.

The small village on the distant shore is Elsenberg; where the king of Sweden is now personally inspecting some new coal-works, which are likely to reward his pains. When you look on the fortress of Kronenberg, you will perceive how proudly it is situated. The form of the building, with its spires and minaurets, is nobly picturesque: the fabric is of gray stone;

and its innumerable windows, varied towers, and other architectural ornaments, make it a striking and beautiful contrast to the dull uniformity of the town. This castle being intended as a protection to the Sound, and to command its entrance, is well fortified on all sides; and has a very respectable provision of cannon towards the water. When lord Nelson passed the Sound, upwards of three hundred pieces of artillery opened upon him from this part of the works; but they failed of effect, as every ball fell short of the mark.

Since that period the inside of this edifice has been closed to the eyes of strangers. However, I was told that there was little reason to lament the prohibition, as it contains nothing worthy notice, save a pair of ebony doors and a few old portraits. Not being able to gain any information respecting the age of the fortress, I venture to guess it at about three hundred years. Probably, as the situation is so commanding, on this very spot once stood the stately turrets of Hamlet the Dane. It seems better suited to a regal abode, than the poor little hill now recorded as having been its site.

Considering myself now in the very haunts of Shakspeare's northern hero, I must linger a little longer to inform you of a few interesting circumstances relating to him, which I have gathered at the fountain-head; from the very source whence our poet must have drawn the incidents of his tragedy. I mean the annals of Denmark, written by Saxo Grammaticus in the twelfth century. The work is in Latin; and as you may not have met with it, I will finish my account of Hamlet's Garden with a short abstract from that prince's history. It will be curious to compare the dialogues of the original, with their counterpart in the play.

Florwendillus, king of Jutland, married Geruthra or Gertrude, the only daughter of Ruric king of Denmark. The produce of this union was a son called Amlettus. When he grew towards manhood, his spirit and extraordinary abilities excited the envy and hatred of his uncle, who, before the birth of Amlettus, was regarded as presumptive heir to the crown. Fengo, which was the name of this haughty prince, conceived a passion for his sister-in-law the queen; and meeting with recipro-

cal feelings, they soon arranged a plan; which putting into execution, he ascended the throne of his brother and espoused the widowed princess. Amlettus (or Hamlet) suspecting that his father had died by the hand, or the devices of his uncle, determined to be revenged. But perceiving the jealousy with which the usurper eyed his superior talents; and the better to conceal his hatred and intentions, he affected a gradual derangement of reason; and at last acted all the extravagancies of an absolute madman. Fengo's guilt induced him to doubt the reality of a malady so favourable to his security; and suspicious of some direful project being hidden beneath assumed insanity, he tried by different stratagems to penetrate the truth. One of these was to draw him into a confidential interview with a young damsel who had been the companion of his infancy; but Hamlet's sagacity, and the timely caution of his intimate friend, frustrated this design. In these two persons we may recognise the Ophelia and Horatio of Shakspeare. A second plot was attended with equal want of success. It was concerted by Fengo that the queen should take her son to task in a private conversation; vainly flattering himself that the prince would not conceal his true state from the pleadings of a mother. Shakspeare has adopted every part of this scene; not only the precise situation and circumstances, but the sentiments, and sometimes the very words themselves. The queen's apartment was the appointed place of conference; where the king, to secure certain testimony, had previously ordered one of his courtiers to conceal himself *under a heap of straw:* so says the historian; and though Shakspeare, in unison with the refinement of more modern times, changes that rustic covering for the royal tapestry, yet it was even as Saxo Grammaticus relates. In those primitive ages, straw, hay, or rushes, strewed on the floor, were the usual carpets in the chambers of the great. One of our Henrys, in making a progress to the north of England, previously sent forward a courier to order *clean straw* at every house where he was to take his lodging. But to return to my subject.

The prince, suspecting there might be a concealed listener, and that it was the king, pursued his wild and frantic acts;

hoping that by some lucky chance he might discover his hiding-place. Watchful of all that passed in the room, as he dashed from side to side he descried a little movement of the uneasy courtier's covering. Suddenly Hamlet sprung on his feet, began to crow like a cock, and flapping his arms against his sides, leaped upon the straw; feeling something human under him, he snatched out his sword and thrust it through the unfortunate lord. The barbarism of the times is most shockingly displayed in the brutal manner with which he treats the dead body; but for the honour of the Danish prince, we must suppose that it was not a merely wanton act, but done the more decidedly to convince the king, when the strange situation of the corpse was seen, how absolutely he must be divested of reason. Being assured he was now alone with his mother, in a most awful manner he turns upon her and avows his madness to be assumed; he reproaches her with her wicked deeds and incestuous marriage; and threatens a mighty vengeance upon the instigator of her crime. I have the more particularly translated part of this speech,* as it will show you, in its original state, the rough diamond which Shakspeare has polished to so transcendant a brightness.

"Hear me, most polluted woman! Thou who art loathsome from thy crimes and thy hypocrisy; whose very breath is impregnated with the falsehood of thine heart! Thou, who only seemest to lament one, who claims and deserves thy truest tears!—Shame!—By what a course of folly hast thou become a common whore! Lasciviously and unlawfully holding in thy detestable soul, conditions with thy husband's murderer—embracing in incest this bosom fiend—and staining with him, the sacred bed of that king—whose son will avenge his blood; and destroy all the obscene allurements to thy execrable adultery, in the object of thy brutal passion.—Granted, thou *mare-mated*, that thy victory is gained; that thou art now linked to the sun of thy lechery—nature of brutes!—and like them ye lose no moments of gratification, impelled but by your beastly wishes.—

* The coarseness of this translation will be pardoned, as it is literal; otherwise than literal, it would be inexpressive of the manners it is intended to represent.

I had forgot—to one worn out and self-consumed by much enjoyment, these examples are excellent; and to a married woman's mind, most suitable.—Aye, forsooth, it must be preferable too, to carry on such warm desires as far as they will extend,—that she should be a husband's brother's wife!—And to add yet unto its pleasures, she must not stand to gain the foul accomplishment, but by the bearing down her wedded lord.—Thou dam of cruelty!——Yes! I have played the mad man, raved!—With this cloak of willing dulness I have wrapped about my reason; it is my guard, while I watch to spring upon my prey. My soul at every hour calls aloud for a murdered father's revenge.—The moment is now arrived.—I waited the opportunity, and time has now given what I so impatiently desired—though, alas! not in all deserving it!—Dwell not, mother, on the dark and secret causes which actuated thy son's apparent madness; wail not for my wild ravings, nor the actions of my insanity: turn thy lamentations on thyself; bemoan thine own infamy, and thine own deformed heart.—Look to thyself!—Deny not thy depravity, and faultiness; for these, thy sorrow is necessary indeed.—Tear such foul weeds from thy bosom, mother; and check the furor of thy crimes.—Thou hast once walked in the light of virtue! call back to your remembrance its serenity, its joys: turn to its pure flame; and once more let thy son see it beam upon his mother's face!"

I well know how feeble is my unpractised pen in transmitting the strength of the original: but take it as the shadow of a sublime subject; and you will see sufficient to afford you an opportunity of judging how much the Hamlet of Saxo Grammaticus, and the Hamlet of Shakspeare thought alike.

In the historian, we find that the admonitions of Hamlet awakened the conscience of the queen, and recalled her to penitence and virtue. The king, observing the change, became doubly suspicious of the prince; and baffling some of the preliminary steps he took to vengeance, Hamlet was entrapped by him into an embassy to England. He sent along with him two courtiers, who bore private letters to the English monarch, requesting him, as the greatest favour he could confer upon Den-

mark, to compass, by secret and sure means, the death of the prince as soon as he landed. Hamlet, during the voyage, had reason to suspect the mission of his companions; and by a stratagem obtaining their credentials, he found the treacherous mandate: and changing it for one wherein he ordered the execution of the two lords, he quietly proceeded with them to the British shore. On landing, the papers were delivered; and the king, without further parley, obeyed what he believed the request of his royal ally: and thus did treason meet the punishment due to its crime. It seems that love in those ages was very rapid in its effects; a very summer fly, to-day revelling in sweets, to-morrow numbered with the dust! for the daughter of the king being charmed with the person and manners of the foreign prince, evinced such marks of tenderness, that Hamlet could not but perceive the depth of his conquest. He was not insensible to her attractions; and receiving the king's assent, in the course of a few days led her to the nuptial altar. Fair as the lady might be, love was not sufficient for his filial heart; still it remembered his father's wrong, and panted for revenge. Amidst all joys, he was like a perturbed ghost that could not rest; and before many suns had rose and set, he obtained a hard wrung leave from his bride; once more set sail and appeared at Elsineur just in time to be a witness of the splendid rites which Fengo (supposing him now to be murdered) had prepared for his funeral. On the proclamation of his arrival, he was welcomed with enthusiasm by the people, whose idol he was; and who had been overwhelmed with grief, when Fengo publicly announced to them his sudden death in England. The king, inflamed with so ruinous a disappointment; and becoming doubly jealous of his growing popularity, now affected no conciliation, but openly manifested his hatred and hostility. Hamlet again had recourse to his pretended madness; and committed so many alarming acts, that Fengo, fearing their direction, ordered his sword to be locked in its scabbard, under a plea of guarding the lunatic from personal harm; but the true reason was, he dreaded the point of it himself. After various adventures, at last the prince accomplishes the death of his uncle's adherents, and vengeance on the fratricide

himself, by setting fire to the palace during the debauch of a midnight banquet. Rushing in amidst the flames, he kills Fengo with his own hand, reproaching him at the moment with his murder, adultery, and incest. Immediately on this act of retribution, he was proclaimed lawful successor to the throne, and crowned with all due solemnity.

Thus far Shakspeare treads in the steps of the annalist: the only difference is in the fate of the hero; in the one he finds a kingdom, in the other a grave. Saxo Grammaticus carries the history further; and after the crowning of Hamlet as king, brings him again into Britain; where, in compliment to that land of beauty, he marries a second wife, the daughter of the Scottish king. Polygamy was no crime in those days: and where person was usually the sole attraction, it is not wonderful that the heart should wander from fair to fair. The soul had then little to do in the attachments between man and woman; she, uneducated in every thing, but the doctrine of passive obedience and the instinct of self-preservation, bestowed her hand where policy inclined her parents to give it; and loved the warrior she espoused, for the valour that afforded her protection: he, devoted to arms and to glory, saw in woman only the object of dalliance, and the continuer of his race. Such was the state of the most endearing band in society, till the promulgation of that religion which now happily fills the greatest part of the globe, taught woman the rank she holds in creation; and imparted to man the power she has to bless his days.

Hamlet brought both his wives to Denmark, and prepared for a long life of prosperity and peace. But the sword hung over his head; war burst around him, and he fell in combat by the hand of Vigelotes the son of Ruric. Saxo Grammaticus sums up his character in a few words. "He was a wise prince and a great warrior. Like Achilles he had the principal actions of his life wrought on his shield. The daughter of the king of Scotland casting her eye on it, loved him for the battles he had won, and became his bride." So much for Hamlet.

In my way from the garden which bears his name, I came up with a regiment of Danish soldiers, exercising near the castle. They were about a thousand strong; and with five hun-

dred artillery, did the duty of the town and citadel. I never saw a stouter, and I may add, seldom a more awkward body of men. Their clothing was coarse and ill-made; but had it been on the well-appointed figure of a well-drilled soldier, I could fancy its looking even elegant. The jacket is scarlet, with sleeves and tassels of light blue; long white pantalooned gaiters; a round hat bound with white, and turned up on the right side with a white feather. A broad belt, to which hangs an unwieldy cartridge-box (a fashion prevalent in every country I have seen excepting England); another belt round the waist, carries a very long bayonet. Their muskets are lighter than those used by the French, and differ little in appearance from ours. I cannot say any thing very flattering either as to the manual exercise, manœuvres, &c. or even of the military air of this specimen of Danish soldiery. I learnt that six years is the limited time for their constant service: after this period they are set at liberty, with no other reserve than being obliged, for two months in every year, to attend parade and go through the usual duty of a soldier. Their pay is about three pence a day, including every thing. Clothing is issued to them once in three years; and as they are not very nice disciplinarians, you can easily imagine what a Falstaffian array they are in by the time their new wardrobe comes round. Being abridged of time, I could not examine further into their merits; else, perhaps, we might have found "that within which passeth show!" but, as in temporal as well as spiritual matters there is generally an outward and visible sign of the inward ability, much cannot be augured from the surface of the Danish *corps militaire*, by your obedient servant, &c.

LETTER II.

St. Petersburgh, September, 1805.

ON re-embarking and leaving Elsineur, the accidental disagreeables of that city were soon forgotten in the natural beauties of the view. The shore, all along the Danish side, presents the most lovely stretch of landscape I ever beheld. Mount Edgecumbe is looked upon as the paradise of England: and what Mount Edgecumbe is in one spot only, so appears the whole of Denmark from Elsineur to Copenhagen. The land is high, and undulating in various romantic and sublime forms. Rich woods, broken by park-like openings and verdant pastures, and interspersed with country-houses and villages for an extent of twenty-three miles, form the clothing of these beautiful hills. A striking contrast to the black and naked line of the opposite coast.

We were too far at sea to discern the capital as distinctly as we wished; but by the assistance of a glass I could plainly perceive its ramparts, and those floating batteries whose cannon bereft England of so many of her gallant sons. Since the action with lord Nelson off this city, Denmark has been solicitous to increase its strength, by replacing all the works (and adding to them), which were destroyed by the fleet of our great admiral.

Being on this subject, I will not deny myself the pleasure of relating an anecdote of that distinguished hero; the circumstance took place during the battle of the Sound. It at least proves that no situation, however dangerous, can disconcert the truly brave man, or render him inattentive to those minutiæ, which being watched by the enemy, betray our weakness, or proclaim our power. You must well remember, from the gazettes of that period, and private accounts, how tremendous was the engagement, and how dreadful the slaughter. In the midst of these horrors, surrounded by the dying and the dead, the British admiral ordered an officer, bearing a flag of truce, to go on shore with a note to the crown prince. It contained a proposal to his royal highness to acquiesce, without further

delay, in the propositions of the British government; not only to put a stop to the present effusion of blood on both sides, but to save from total destruction Copenhagen and its arsenals, which he would otherwise level with the water. Whilst his lordship was writing with all the calmness of a man in his study, he desired colonel Stewart to send some one below for a light, that he might seal his despatch. Colonel Stewart obeyed; but no one appearing with a candle, when lord Nelson had nearly completed his letter, he inquired the reason of such neglect, and found that the boy who had been sent for it, was killed in his way by a cannon shot. The order was repeated: upon which colonel Stewart observed, "Why should your lordship be so particular to use wax? why not a wafer? The hurry of battle will be a sufficient apology for the violation of etiquette." "It is to prove, my friend," replied lord Nelson, "that we are in no hurry; that this request is not dictated by fear, or a wish on our part to stop the carnage from the least apprehension of the fate of this day to us, that I am thus particular. Were I to seal my letter with a wafer, it would still be wet when it reached the shore; it would speak of haste. Wax is not the act of an instant; and it impresses the receiver accordingly." The reasoning of the admiral was duly honoured by the result. The Danes acceded to his proposal, and a cessation of hostilities was the consequence.

Having passed through the Sound, a spot ever memorable to England, we proceeded up the Baltic; and during our voyage came in view of several fine islands, which gave much variety and interest to the scene.

On the night of the twelfth of September we arrived at Cronstadt. We landed next morning, when I was amazingly struck by the extraordinary appearance of almost every individual I met. Men with long beards, brown and sun-burnt skins, strangely shaped caps, and greasy skin habits of all possible forms, were mingled with a few dressed in the fashion of our nation; and numberless others in the dapper-cut uniforms of their own military, naval, and civil departments. This widely contrasted crowd meeting my eyes at the moment my ears were first saluted with a language I had never before heard, made

altogether so strange an impression on my mind as is not to be described. I seemed in a new region; and indeed every sense was called forth to wonder and exercise.

The island on which the town is founded, extends nearly five English miles in length, but no more than one in breadth. Peter the Great having fixed on St. Petersburgh as his residence, built and fortified this place as a protection to the mouth of the river Neva, on which was situated his infant capital. The works were completed after drawings by his own hand, which are now to be seen at Cronstadt; and they were of such strength as to require little addition by the succeeding Tzars. The most that has since been done, was to face them with immense stones from the rocks of Finland, and to crown their heights with innumerable pieces of cannon. The well-constructed forts in the gulf, as well as the difficulty of the navigation, from shoals and other impediments, render this place almost impregnable in itself; and make it a certain security to St. Petersburgh, against any attack by water.

Every convenience that is necessary in a maritime depot, is to be found at Cronstadt. Basons, docks, canals, and spacious moles, fronted by solid and colossal masses of granite. Hundreds of vessels from all nations, annually ride with ease and safety within these protections; and in a harbour adjoining, which is solely appropriated to the navy, are many fine ships of war. The town itself has a very commanding appearance; and at the first glance of the public buildings, you are struck with their magnificence. But draw near, and many a wart and wrinkle is discovered on this fair face. Parts of even the most superb edifices are falling into ruins; and it is with difficulty you can ascend the straggling staircases which lead to the offices of those employed in acts of state, they are so obstructed by heaps of rubbish, bricks and mortar. However, as the caprices of the late emperor, by palsying improvement, and corrupting what was already done, threw the whole empire into disorder and decay; so the virtues of his son (who like a presiding genius has his eye over all) will soon restore Cronstadt to the faultless magnificence it formerly boasted.

During my short stay at this port, I received many kindnesses from the governor, admiral Hennacoff. The merits of that

excellent man command my esteem, as much as his attentions do my gratitude. I must acquaint you with one *trait* in his character; and then I am sure you will revere him as I do. When the emperor Paul, in one of his frantic moods, ordered the English residents at Cronstadt to be sent, during the severities of a very inclement winter, many thousand versts up the country, admiral Hennacoff threw himself between the rigor of the emperor's commands and these unfortunate men. Indeed he treated them with so much humanity and unexampled generous providence, that words are too weak to express his goodness and their sense of obligation. And all this was undertaken at the risk of his own fortunes; perhaps, of his life! How grateful is such a view of human nature! How does it prove the pure feelings of a good man, who prefers incurring the chance of ruin, before giving up the godlike joy of dispensing comfort and protection amongst hundreds of desolated strangers lawlessly sentenced to banishment; and too probably to death! When tranquillity became once more established between the two countries, the Russian company, much to their honour, presented the noble admiral with a piece of plate, containing an inscription worthy of his virtues.

Having bidden adieu to this benevolent man, and arranged every thing for my departure to St. Petersburgh, I hired a boat in conjunction with two other gentlemen (purposing to go by water), into which we put ourselves, with all the moveables allowed. But alas! that was no more than what a handkerchief would contain! The rest of our property having previously been imperially sealed in due form and order, by the attendants from the custom-house. It was to follow us with the cargo of the ship, "as soon as possible." But as this *soon as possible* sometimes lasts a very long time, travellers are very often put to great inconvenience for want of a wardrobe; the government allowance not amounting even to Sterne's "half dozen shirts and pair of black silk breeches."

The boat in which we embarked had a canopy, draperied and fashioned like those belonging to the bodies-corporate, which on gala days adorn the Thames. Ten men, and a superior who guided the helm, formed our crew; all were appareled alike, in a sort of low *beef-eater* hat bound with yellow and

decorated with a feather; a blue tunic with sleeves, covered their body; and round its center was wrapped an orange-coloured sash, whose ends hung down a great, and rather incommodious length; loose trowsers of blue stripe, tucked carelessly into clumsy boots, completed their habiliments. Some were bearded short, others shaven, but most with well-curled mustachios; and wearing their hair hanging in an equal length from ear to ear, like the fringe on a curtain or hammer-cloth. This, by the way, is the usual mode which all the common people adopt in fashioning their locks; and certainly it protects the head, neck, and ears from the piercing cold; and is far from being unpicturesque, if not graceful.

The wind blew perfectly fair; and the people having little to do, we gave them a glass or two of brandy to amuse them. Our present had the desired effect; and they entertained both themselves and us, through the remainder of our voyage, by singing, with much simplicity and ease, several of their national airs. The strains are wild, and possess many pleasing and melancholy passages: yet the whole bore a strong tone of monotony and abruptness. The one you heard (given to me by the prince de Courland while in England), is sufficient to convey a very just idea of the general character of these northern songs; and I think the very monotony which dwells so long on the ear with one or two plaintive notes, is the cause of their deep melancholy impression. I have remarked this effect in old Scottish Laments, and also in the wild dirges of the Irish peasantry.

The distance between Cronstadt and St. Petersburgh being not more than twenty-eight miles, we arrived at the latter place the same evening; passing, as we sailed smoothly along, a beautiful shore to our right, covered with the most luxuriant scenery of trees, gardens, and the spacious mansions of the nobility. On landing, I took up my quarters in one of the best hotels the city affords; but as it is as expensive as the dearest in London, without half of their neatness and comforts, I will not dwell longer on a point this metropolis so decidedly fails in. To-morrow I shall resume my pen, and with a subject more worthy your attention; namely, the whole city of St. Petersburgh.

LETTER III.

St. Petersburgh, 1805.

I AM at a loss, my dear friend, where to commence a description of this splendid city. Every object excites admiration; and those objects are so numerous, that I find it difficult to select what you might deem most interesting, from an assemblage of such, to me, equally prominent beauties. I, who have come direct from London, may perhaps view St. Petersburgh with peculiar impressions. The plainness of our metropolis, the almost total neglect of all architectural graces in the structure of even the best houses, and the absolute deformity of many of the inferior sort; all these things strike the eye as forcibly, though in an opposite direction, as mine was with the magnificence of St. Petersburgh. Such grandeur and symmetry in building, I never before beheld in any of the different capitals to which my fondness for travel has conducted me. Every house seems a palace, and every palace a city.

On every side are long and wide streets of highly decorated stone edifices; interspersed with the still more stately mansions of the nobility, the roofs of which are curiously painted in rich colours, harmoniously blended with the gilded domes and spires of the neighbouring churches. Although this city abounds in public buildings, in a style of gigantic architecture no where else to be found, yet the taste of the emperor and the industry of his subjects are daily undertaking new works; which, when completed, will still more strongly call forth the admiration of the traveller. Amongst the most beautiful of these growing structures are the Kazan church, the new Exchange, the Manege for the chevalier guards, and the Façade of the Admiralty. I suppose no country can boast so long and uninterrupted a street as the *Great* and *English Quay;* the granite front and pavement of which are unparalleled. The canals are worthy of the same august hand; and the superb bridges which clasp them from side to side, rear their colossal pillars in all the majesty of imperial magnificence. The dingy hue of bricks, or the frip-

pery of plaster, seldom offends the eye in this noble city. Turn where you will, rise immense fabrics of granite: and did you not know the history of the place, you might suppose that it had been founded on a vast plain of that rocky production; whence had been derived the stones of the buildings; and in the bosom of which had been dug the river and canals that intersect its surface. But it is from the quarries of Finland that the Russians dig these bodies of granite, and transport and place them here in lasting monuments of their own unwearied industry. That mass on which is erected the immortal statue of Peter the First, is one huge instance of their indefatigable labour; and the forest of columns in the new Metropolitan church, is not a less worthy proof of the vigour with which they pursue so meritorious a toil. This edifice, as I before said, is dedicated to *the Mother of God of Kazan.* Though far from being completed, sufficient is elevated of its plan to give a tolerably accurate idea of the sublime feature it will make in the face of this city. The architect, who is a Russian, seems to have had the image of St. Peter in his mind when he laid the foundations of this building; and if it be finished as it is begun, I have no doubt of its being a very powerful rival to the two great cathedrals of Rome and London. The pillars intended for the inside of the church, are to be each of one entire stone; the shaft, in length fifty-two feet, polished to the utmost perfection, and surmounted with a capital of the Corinthian order richly gilt and burnished. Every other ornament will be in corresponding taste. Niches are formed on the exterior, for the reception of bronze statues of saints, fifteen feet high. And at some distance, in front of the building, is to be erected a single column of granite of two hundred feet in length; a piece of that size, sufficient to form it, having lately been discovered. Its magnitude will be so immense as to exceed the height of Pompey's pillar by many feet. It is expected that in the course of four or five years the whole work will be completed. At that period the old church is to be pulled down; and thus an area will be left that must considerably improve the situation of the new.

The architect of this great design was formerly a slave of

count Strogonoff. But that nobleman, out of respect to his talents, gave him his liberty. Indeed no generous mind could have done otherwise; it would have been sacrilege to the image of God in man, the richly endowed soul, the creative power of genius! to have trammelled it with the degrading reflections of bondage.

Many of the labourers employed on these buildings, come some thousand versts from the interior: and when the frost sets in, they retire thither again, to await the more genial season which will allow them to recommence their toil. The multitudes now engaged in forming the various parts of these large works, are interesting and curious. All difficulties connected with their business, are overcome by human exertions alone. What in England would easily be performed by one horse, with a little mechanical aid, is here achieved by the united strength of numbers of men. Hence there is much useless labour to regret. Frequently we see a hundred men, with ropes and handspikes, busied in accomplishing no more than one quarter of that number, with a few of our assisting inventions, would easily finish in half the time. Setting aside utility, these groupes add to the picturesque of the scene; which is considerably heightened by their long beards, rugged sheepskins, and uncouth attitudes. How strange it is to look on these apparently savage beings, and think that from their hands arise such elegant and classical structures! Indeed I never saw, in all its parts, so regularly built a city; nor in any place, so much attention to keep all in due order. The present emperor, who like its illustrious founder, has the perfecting of this residence at heart, leaves no suggestion unexecuted, which can increase its ornament, or the people's convenience.

Amidst the numberless improvements which are daily making, is a flat pavement on one side of most of the principal streets; the benefit of which will be felt by all persons: it being otherwise dangerous to walk without some division from the carriage way, where those vehicles are always passing to and fro with a rapidity that threatens the life or limbs of every unfortunate pedestrian.

While I am yet in the street, though out of the way of these

formidable attackers of personal safety, I will give you some account of their shapes and appearance as they roll along. In every respect they differ widely from ours. In the first place, their cleanliness is not of the first water; and a drop of oil, or any other liquid, never by any lucky chance falls upon the leathern departments of the carriage or harness to soften their rigidity. The duty of the coachman seems merely to drive; and as men of rank and fortune are entitled to be drawn by four horses, a postillion is also necessary; but strange to tell, this equestrian youth rides the off horse; a contrary custom to that practised in every country I have seen. Whenever the machine is in a state of rapidity, it is the office of this boy to be on the continual bawl of the Russian word for *take care, take care!* A precaution, you will readily understand from what I have before said, to be indispensable. The rate at which these fellows drive is seldom less than a gallop; and as this is the fashionable pace for carriages of all sorts, you can easily judge how safe it must be for passengers moving in an humbler sphere.

The decorations of the horses driven by the nobility, are very striking. The harness is leather (most profusely spread, almost into net-work, over the creature), studded and embossed with brass, and various other nobs, buckles, crescents, and tassels, with great taste and elegance. This caparison is quite eastern, and has a most superb effect. The horses are in harmony with their ornaments, as their manes and tails are allowed to grow to an immense length; they are plaited and tied up very gracefully. The figure of the animal is fine, and partakes of the Persian in shape and air; his motions are loose and rapid; and apparently so wild, that the spectator must suppose that nature has been his only master.

Hackney coaches (in our form,) are not known; but as the extent of the city is very great, conveniences of that kind being absolutely necessary, a sort of hireable machine is to be had, which pretty well supplies the deficiency. It is denominated a Drojeka, and carries an appearance at first sight uncommonly odd and ridiculous. I know not how to describe the visible effect it had upon my mind. It bears not the least affinity to any of the wheeled tribe on our side the water; but looks

more like a gigantic insect of the grasshopper genus, pursuing and clinging to the heels of an affrighted horse. As this strange conveyance is totally unknown in England, I shall bring you closer to it, and point out, as correctly as I can, its peculiar shape and modes.

This effort of northern ingenuity runs on four low wheels; being a sort of parallelogram, with four leathern wings projecting at no great distance from its body, and which, making an unexpected curve, ingeniously pass in a semicircular line towards the ground; being intended as a resting place for the feet, and a defence for the traveller against liquid dirt. The part on which you sit is covered with a cushion; and in order to render the motion more easy, it hangs on springs. The occupier of the carriage seats himself as on a saddle; and for his better security if inexperienced in this mode of journeying, adheres to the driver (who sits in front), by holding by his sash. Believe me it requires no small degree of education in the art of keeping a seat, to adhere with any decency, much less ease and grace, to the saddle of one of these extraordinary vehicles. And yet, while an Englishman would be bouncing off and on with the clumsiness of a clown in a pantomime, you may see the Russians so perfected by practice, as to sit their wooden horse with all the elegance of the most managed equestrian. The lightness and velocity with which they pass from one part of the town to another, is incredible; and the expense is by no means considerable, as the equivalent for carrying you three miles, is not more than an English shilling. From this circumstance most of the lower orders can at times command this accommodation; and indeed the public ones are principally supported by the Russ merchants, and other opulent citizens, as the higher ranks all keep carriages of their own. Its many inconveniencies, arising from the exposure of the occupier to the dust and sun in summer, and the mud and rain in spring and autumn, render it a vehicle totally incompatible with any ideas of personal neatness or comfort. On the back of the Isvotchic (or driver), a plate is fastened, on which is deciphered the number of the carriage, and the quarter to which it belongs; in order that should he be insolent, or over-charge

his employer, redress may be obtained. There not being an absolutely prescribed fare for given distances, strangers are frequently imposed on by these men, who, like the hackney-coachmen in London, are ever ready to over-reach the unwary.

I am sorry to say that this spirit of extortion is very common at St. Petersburgh. And as shopkeepers, and others of the lower orders, make a practice of demanding double the worth of their commodities, travellers, who know not that they will be content with half the sum, are liable either to be defrauded, and leave the place under the impression of its exorbitant expense; or, when they discover the cheat, conceive no very favourable opinion of Russian honesty. But alas! I fear the passion for a hasty accumulation of riches is not peculiar to our northern neighbours. In an ignorant people, just emerging to civilization, we see covetousness without a veil. Eager to share in the good things which are opened to them on every side, they consider not, because they do not yet understand, the superior advantages of character. But are the people who have long enjoyed the privileges of education and polished society, are they exempt from this degrading vice? I am afraid not. With them it is only more modest; aware of its own infamy, it slinks from sight under various masks, while the objects of its contractorships, and the tenantry of the land, are groaning under neglect and oppression. Selfishness is the vice of human nature; and very difficult it is to hold it in the medium between savage avidity and luxurious desires.

Before I reached this city I had been told by many of its great expense. As a single man I did not find it so: but were I to pass a judgment on it from what I have seen, I should say that for a family it would be dear enough. And yet this would not arise from the high charges of any particular articles, but from the customs of society, and the splendor which is here considered as a necessary of life. Under this view it is expensive. But were it fashionable to live here in the simple style which most genteel families do in England, the calculation would be in the opposite scale. It is over-hasty to pronounce a country altogether dearer than our own, because one or two commodities may be so: examine further, and you find a counterpoise in

articles being cheap at St. Petersburgh which are of great price in London: and thus the reasonable merchandise of one country being balanced against the exorbitant charges of another, the equilibrium is kept tolerably even. Provisions are cheap; and so are some other indispensable necessaries: 120*l.* annually, will provide a good carriage, two horses, a coachman, and every requisite both for it and the sledge. Fifteen rubles a month (25*l.* per annum), is the common wages for men servants; out of which they board themselves. House-rent is the most chargeable thing here; but the trifling incumbrances entailed on the Russian householder, as national claims, are so small they scarcely deserve mentioning.

In the families of our English merchants resident at St. Petersburgh, you may still recal the simplicity of home, in the chastened elegance of their abodes. Their tables, as well as those of other foreign merchants, are always open to their friends; and the warmest hospitality ever ready to welcome all who bring introductions from their correspondents abroad. This truly estimable order of men are held in the highest esteem by the nobles of a metropolis which they so truly benefit and enrich. Many of them possess little paradises on the road leading to the imperial palace of Peterhoff, to which their families resort for the hot and short-lived months of summer. Since my arrival I have paid several visits to these charming retreats, where every thing around reminded me of dear England. The house embosomed in trees, and furnished in the English style; the gardens planted in the same taste; and the language and manners of the inmates; all would have persuaded me to forget I was in a strange land. But I wanted still something more to complete the illusion: look where I would, I could nowhere see those faces which are ever the dearest objects of remembrance to your friend.

LETTER IV.

St. Petersburgh, 1805.

BEFORE I lead you further into St. Petersburgh, I must make you pause with me on the shores of the Neva; there to contemplate the wonderful industry with which its slimy bed has been turned into the firm earth that now supports such a weight of ponderous walls. The city, with its beautiful suburbs, is built on the banks of this river; the waters of which flow from the vast lake of Ladoga, seventy or eighty versts above St. Petersburgh. As the Neva approaches the Gulf of Finland it gradually expands, embracing within its numerous arms several islands, on which is planted the whole of this immense metropolis. These insular plains are covered with streets, churches, gardens and palaces; and like the Adriatic isles of Venice, are united into one great city, by innumerable bridges.

The manual labour of the early residents in this place, animated by the persevering genius of their glorious monarch, formed the dank and unwholesome marshes into these castellated rocks; and levelling the wilderness on the shore, where once grew the tangled forest, now stands the stately palace and blooms the gay parterre. The most luxuriant cultivation extends for many miles around the city: and could the immortal founder behold its present Arcadian scenes, and the regal pride of *encolumined* walls, he would acknowledge that his successors had done honour to his name.

The islands of the Neva, which are appropriated to the mansions and gardens of the nobility, are favourite objects of recreation with the inhabitants of the town, who visit their shady banks in light boats; and stepping on shore, enjoy all the pleasures of pure air and enlivening nature in these romantic retreats. The house and gardens of count Strogonoff are the most celebrated, and justly; for I never saw in any place more picturesque beauty guided by such admirable taste. From the uninterrupted flatness of the situation, the views cannot be striking or varied. It is all one verdant, gorgeous plain; here

smiling in the balmy assemblage of trees and gardens; there glittering with golden domes and painted spires. Human industry has done every thing here. The very platform of her work was fixed by herself in the bosom of the ever-shifting waters. On that she planted this goodly frame; and with the aid of ingenuity and taste, has given to it the last strokes of architectural perfection.

One of the most interesting of the structures which were erected in the early times of the city, is the fortress that Peter the Great built from a plan drawn by himself. It stands on one of the islands; and is handsomely faced with granite, being a regularly appointed fort. It is now used as a prison for state criminals. In the church attached to the fortress are deposited the bodies of the imperial family, from Peter the First to the present period. On viewing the tombs of these departed sovereigns, nothing splendid strikes the eye; nothing disturbs the awful solemnity of the scene. Each sarcophagus is covered with a velvet pall richly embroidered; but which is only unfolded on holy festivals, or occasionally to gratify the curiosity of a visitor. In the body of the church are many standards, placed there as trophies of the various wars in which this country has been engaged. Swedish, Turkish, Persian, Polish, French, and those of many inferior nations, stand around like a blighted forest, in thick and mouldering majesty. Between these ensigns of conquest are exhibited others yet more humbling to the vanquished powers. The keys of all the fortresses and cities which the victorious arms of Russia have reduced to subjection! Ishmael, Occhacoff, Warsaw, and Derbent; as well as many colossal bunches from more distant regions, for the transitory possession of which, thousands of brave men have paid with their lives! They were hung up in due order, and named and dated with the greatest exactness. A proud sight for an ambitious and warlike prince! and an inspiriting one for a people who are exposing themselves to the legions of a conqueror that seems to be fortune's minion. Here are the registers of former prowess; and as they look, they grasp the steel with redoubled vigour, and rush to the field, determined to add to the bannered heap, or perish before their own

standards. Man will follow interest to the edge of the precipice, but place honour on the opposite side and he will leap into her arms. When this is the spirit of an army, it is invincible. Such were the soldiers of Peter the Great; such of Suwarroff; and many are now in the armies of the present emperor, who emulate the character and fame of that unconquered general.

The keys of Derbent had been deposited in this church a few days only before I visited it, it being the third time that place had fallen under the Russian arms. Peter the Great was the first to whom it surrendered. Platon Zuboff, in the reign of Catherine II., reduced it a second time. And it is rather extraordinary, in its last defeat, the very man who presented the keys to Zuboff was fated, at a very advanced age, to lay them at the feet of a third conqueror. Here is also the bread and salt which was given with the keys of Warsaw to field-marshal Suwarroff, as a mark of the entire subjection of that kingdom to the imperial arms. The spire of this edifice is high like that of the admiralty, and gilt with ducat gold.

In one quarter of the fortress are extensive buildings appropriated to coining. For the apparatus, the government is indebted to Mr. Bolton of Soho. Several of his people are now here engaged in completing the necessary works.

In the walls and bastions which bulwark this castellated island are cells, or rather state prisons, where many a wretched being has lingered out an anxious life. In one of these places died the son of Peter the First after his condemnation. And here the unhappy and beautiful princess Tarrakanoff met her fate. In 1771 the Neva rose to a tremendous height, and inundating part of the city, entirely overflowed the fortress. All who were in the dungeons perished under the waters; and amongst the number, it *is said*, was her whose tale so darkly shadows the brilliant career of the great empress.

Take the whole of this fortified island together, with its embattled towers and pinnacles; and when under a setting sun you view it from the long perspective of the opposite street, no object can be finer. The burnished spire burning in brightness, and casting its stream of light over the turrets of the for-

tress; the Neva flowing in shining waves at its base, and bearing on its bosom myriads of boats passing and repassing, some filled with the treasures of merchandise, and others in which the happy navigators chant their national strains as they float along. No scene can possess more of the picturesque and beautiful. And when we contrast the gay court air of these northern gondolas with the savage barks from more distant quarters, and take in the variously attired groupes busy on the shore, a wilderness is mingled with the polished features of the view, which makes the whole appear the effect of enchantment.

Having led you through this fatal, romantic island, I shall reconduct you across the waves, and bring you before the walls of the marble palace and church. The ideas suggested by the names of those two edifices are those of elegance and splendor. When we speak of a marble structure, and consider the costliness of the material, with the classic uses to which it has generally been appropriated, we expect to behold every beauty of architecture displayed on its splendid surface. But here we see neither the one nor the other: and I will venture to assert, that any person who was not told the palace and church in question were built of marble, might pass them by a hundred times as unworthy of his notice. This valuable stone, when not white, is unfit for any but small and internal decorations, where its composition will be more near the eye. Its veins, blending shades and polish, are lost in the infinite parts and height of a gigantic and extensive building. The marble palace and church are perhaps the most expensive, most observed, and least admirable of any in the city. The first is the residence of the grand duke Constantine; but has nothing to boast of either in the fitting up or furniture.

The foundation of the church was laid by the empress Catherine, and finished wretchedly with brick by the emperor Paul. For the honour of the empire, I hope that it will either be altered to the empress's original design, or pulled down altogether. It stands in one of the finest squares in Europe, called Isaac's Place, and particularly celebrated for containing the admirable equestrian statue of Peter the Great. This work

of modern art was erected by the commands of the late empress; and like all her projects bears the stamp of greatness. The name of the artist is Falconet; he was a Frenchman: but this statue, for genius and exquisite execution, would have done honour to the best sculptors of any nation. A most sublime conception is displayed in the design. The allegory is finely imagined; and had he not sacrificed the result of the whole to the prominence of his groupe, the grand and united effect of the statue and its pedestal striking at once upon the eye, would have been unequalled in the works of man. A mass of granite of a size at present immense, but formerly most astonishing, is the pedestal. A steep aclivity like that of a rugged mountain carries the eye to its summit, which looks down on the opposite side to a descent nearly perpendicular. The figure of the hero is on horseback, supposed to have attained the object of his ambition, by surmounting all the apparent impossibilities which so arduous an enterprise presented. The victorious animal is proudly rearing on the highest point of the rock, whilst his imperial master stretches forth his mighty arm as the father and protector of his country. A serpent, in attempting to impede his course, is trampled on by the feet of the horse, and writhing in all the agonies of expiring nature. The emperor is seated on the skin of a bear; and habited in a tunic and a sort of toga which forms the drapery behind. His left hand guides the reins; his right (as I before observed) is advanced straight forward on the same side of the horse's neck. The head of the statue is crowned with a laurel wreath.

Having described its disposition, I shall now speak more minutely of its merits; and, if you will allow me to find any defect in so glorious a piece of workmanship, glance at the few imperfections I was able to discern. The thought seems almost sacrilege; and yet as a mortal's creation, we have no reason to expect it should be exempted from the mark of fallibility. The design is faultless; and executed in a style of greatness worthy the character to whom it is dedicated. The majestic features and heroic expression of the head prove how deeply the artist was impressed with the grandeur of the soul whose outward covering he was thus called upon to pourtray. And yet

I must not give the honour entirely to genius, for much of it belongs to love. We all know that it was this tender passion which first discovered the art of commemorating the human form. What the maid of Corinth did by her lover was done by a young damsel of France with regard to Peter the Great. She loved his person and adored his mind. The wonderful bust which she modelled of him, declares what a godlike image of himself he had stamped on her heart; and the divine manner with which she has given this impression to the eyes of men, is beyond description perfect. Falconet saw this bust, and from its breathing lines formed the head of his statue. The contour of the face expresses the most powerful command; and that exalted, boundless, expansion of thought which so wisely dictated his measures, and confirmed him to pursue them with unabated energy, till they met the full fruition of his wishes in the prosperity and happiness of his people. The position of his outstretched arm is rather stiff; being almost a straight line from the shoulder to the point of the middle finger; in some views we know not whether it be a hand or a truncheon. The waist is too long. Mr. Falconet might plead in excuse that the emperor was so shaped. That is true; but the artist might have availed himself of the license allowed to taste, and without any violation of truth a few folds of drapery would have concealed this glaring want of grace. The legs and thighs appear too short for the upper part of the figure; and when we suppose it dismounting and standing by itself, we cannot but think that such insufficient supports would sink under the weight of so colossal a body. The horse, in my opinion, is not to be surpassed. When I was in Paris I saw those fine equestrian statues which the French took from Venice, and set up in the *Place de Carrousel;* but remember nothing in them that was superior to this. To all the beauties of the ancient form, it unites the easy grace of nature, with a fire which pervades every line, and gives such a life to the statue, that as you gaze you expect to see it leap from the pinnacle into the air. There is nothing gravitating in this sublime steed: it would not touch the ground; but seems framed to tread the fields of ether with those of the sun.

The difficulty of keeping so great a mass of weighty metal in so volant an attitude, has been most ingeniously and admirably overcome by the artist. The sweep of the tail, with the hinder parts of the horse, are interwoven with the curvatures of the expiring snake; and together compose a sufficient counterpoise to the figure and fore-part of the animal.

To form an adequate pedestal for so magnificent a work the empress, at an enormous expense and expenditure of the most indefatigable labour, brought a huge rock of granite from Wyborg. It was transported on large iron balls, and with other mechanical aids, safe and whole to St. Petersburgh. I saw a curious model of it, with the dimensions of the stone, journeying machines, and groupes of natives employed about it, at the academy of arts. It was the original wish of the empress Catherine that on this rough piece of nature the grand founder of St. Petersburgh should be placed. But the sculptor, perhaps from the reason I before hinted, decided otherwise. He said it ought to be adapted to the rules of art: and taking it under his own chissel, by fine curves and studied shapes soon robbed it of all sublimity; and left nothing of nature but the matter of which it was composed. Originally perfect for its object, its bold lines and precipitous sides were fine emblems of the country whose ruggedness he had subdued, and whose prejudices of a thousand years he had surmounted and laid at his feet. The present form of the rock, lessened one half from its first dimensions, expresses nothing but the awkward bulging shape of a heavy cloud. Indeed, so bad was the business, that after all the cutting and carving, a large piece was obliged to be joined on again to replace what the jealousy or the false taste of the artist had destroyed. When Catherine beheld the erection for the first time, she expressed so much disappointment at the sight, as to ask with an air of displeased surprise, "what had been made of the rock!" I cannot omit mentioning an interesting circumstance which took place at the presentation of this statue.

The empress, surrounded by her court, took a station admirably adapted to behold at once the monument she had commanded to be raised to the honour of her predecessor; her ex-

ample in greatness and her brother in fame. The troops formed a barrier between the scene of action and the populace; leaving a wide open space betwixt it and the platform on which Catherine and her nobility stood. At the discharge of cannon, and amidst the sound of drums and trumpets the scaffolding which concealed this work of art, fell to the ground. A general shout of admiration rent the air; and while all eyes were fixed on the statue, a venerable figure burst through the ranks, and rushing towards the towering image of Peter, prostrated himself before it. The confusion so strange an incident produced immediately excited the empress's attention and made her inquire into the cause. The object of the tumult was brought before her in the form of an old athletic man, dressed in the naval uniform of the time when the victories of the emperor she now celebrated, claimed the astonishment and admiration of all Europe.

"Who are you? What are you?" demanded she.

"I am the servant of my old master Peter the Great, and your majesty's faithful subject. I served many years under his command. And hearing that I should again behold him to-day, my last act of gratitude was to throw myself at his feet; and had I there breathed out the life that has too long survived him, I should have been glad; it being the only tribute I have now to bestow."

The empress turned to count Tchermachoff, and reproved him for not having informed her of the existence of this venerable seaman.

"Ah, heaven bless your majesty!" interrupted the veteran, "none here are to blame for my obscurity. Many years have past since I appeared either in the field of battle or of life: and had not this great occasion called me, I should never perhaps have mingled with a crowd again. They who knew my services are now all gone down to their graves."

After faithfully recounting to the empress the events of his life (who at first had suspected the circumstance to have been contrived to surprise her), she settled on him a handsome pension; and from that day so distinguished him, that he became an almost constant inmate in the palace, and a favourite

until his death, with the whole of the imperial family. The name of this extraordinary old man was Resen. He was not a native of Russia; and it is a fact well ascertained, that he served in the French fleet at the memorable battle of *la Hogue*. After which he attached himself to the Tzar Peter, and accompanied him in most of his enterprises in the Baltic and Black sea; in which latter station he was when the emperor died in 1725. He remained there thirty years on duty; and when he returned to St. Petersburgh a sad desolation met him. Time or new interests had so blotted him from the minds of men, that with much difficulty he obtained half-pay. With this poor pittance he retired into an obscure corner of the city, where he dragged through life forgotten and unknown, till the monument of his august master rose like the shade of the departed hero to recal him to men and to happiness. He passed the residue of his days with every comfort; and died in the year 1796, at an age exceeding a hundred.

This venerable subject has led me from the statue, on whose rocky pedestal is affixed to each side the following simple inscription in bronze.

PETRO PRIMO.—CATHERINA SECUNDA.

The name alone of either "contained a volume of noble matter," and Catherine was greatly aware of its force. Conscious of her own spirit, she turned her eagle eye upon the splendors of Peter the Great and did not shrink. No petty jealousy of the glory of her predecessor operated to make her subtract from the rock on which she engraved his fame. It was a mighty soul, self-satisfied in its own abundant worth, awarding with a generous hand the full laurel to its bright compeer. When I look on the statue of Peter, I see as glorious a monument of Catherine's greatness as of his renown: and like the veteran seaman am ready to fall down before such a remembrancer of kindred virtues; such a remembrancer of the truly patriotic spirit, which turned the desert into a city, and called the perishing natives from their trackless snows to homes of plenty, comfort, and civilization! Adieu.

LETTER V.

St. Petersburgh, September, 1805.

THE withering hand of autumn has already seized on every vestige of the brief but delightful summer. The evenings are chilled by the breath of approaching winter. She comes not here with the bracing airs of attempered frost; but with a malignant frown blights the lingering herbage, hardens the earth to impenetrable stone, and seems to petrify the very springs of life. So it is that her advances affect me; but I am told that I shall see a very different sight from the one I anticipate, when this formidable season really does appear. At present she is only *casting her shadow before;* and ere it is occupied by her august presence, I must describe a few of the amusements which are called the summer pleasures of St. Petersburgh.

The present emperor, in consideration of those persons who are not so fortunate as to possess country residences, has established a kind of recreation in this city, which in some measure supplies the deficiency. By his directions, a convenient and well-gravelled walk, about a mile long, and planted with trees, is formed around the southern face of the admiralty. On this spot tents are pitched, well stored with ices and cakes for the refreshment of the company; who assemble here, as we do at Vauxhall, for the pleasure of beholding the young, the lovely, and the gay. A similar promenade is laid out in the middle of a fine street of many versts in length; which is terminated at one end by the superb colonnades of the admiralty, and at the other, by the monastery of St. Alexander Nefsky. From the regularity and equal lines of this street it is termed the grand perspective. These two places, with the granite pavements on both the quays, form what is called the street promenades.

The Summer Garden is another scene of amusement. It is laid out in the Dutch style, in angular and stiff parterres, and studded about with a few wretched and mutilated statues. During the hot months, the shade of the trees, and the crowd of visitors,

arrayed like a tulip bed, render it a not unpleasant scene. But for peculiar charms, I cannot say much; the only thing in it really worthy of notice, is a very high and richly wrought iron façade (perhaps unequalled in Europe), which at certain distances is divided by columns of granite. The walk is bounded by the river Neva at one end, and by the Red Palace (so called from its colours) at the other. This huge pile of windows, friezes, pediments, and chimneys, a sort of architectural *melange* of military and domestic ornaments, was built on the site of the old Summer Palace; the residence of Peter the Great. It is surrounded by a wet ditch, defended by draw-bridges; and during the time of the late emperor, was his favourite abode. He considered it the child of his creation; and a most dear one it proved: for here, in the apartments which look into the plain for exercising the imperial troops, he met with that fate so well known to all. Sir John Carr has described the particulars with great accuracy in his *Northern Summer*. I will not repeat the tale here; but rather refer to the curious particulars contained in that elegant work.

Amongst the many absurd whims which infected the brain of this monarch, was one for painting with various discordant colours, the bridges, watch-houses, and imperial gates throughout the empire. These harlequin jackets were put on every thing that answered to this description, from one end of Russia to the other, by a special ukase, all in one day. The Red Palace was indebted for its present fiery hue to a very simple circumstance. A lady of high rank, of whom his majesty was a great admirer, happened to appear one night at a ball where he was present, with a pair of gloves of this colour on her arms. The fancy of Paul was so struck, that the next day it became his favourite tint; and he gave instant orders that his new residence should be painted accordingly. Hence it is called the Red Palace: and a most frightful and glaring appearance it makes. Another caprice of the emperor tended to fill up the ridiculous of this unfortunate abode. He must needs have his cipher of P. 1st. surmounted with a crown, affixed in every part of the building; for what reason he never declared, only it was his will: and now over every corner, frieze, door, win-

dow, or latticed-hole, are these imperial letters multiplied without end. A person once attempted to count them, and left off perfectly weary and in despair, after he had numbered eight thousand.

You must now accompany me to scenes more worthy of their august resident. I will not be so fatiguing as to drag you through the many princely mansions of the nobility, which for magnitude and splendour might in England be denominated palaces. Magnificence is so much the passion of this country, that I should exhaust your patience or your belief, should I attempt to describe all; so I will confine myself to the emperor's abodes; and shall begin with the Hermitage.

This spot, once the retreat of majesty and love, is only a select part of a vast range of buildings, called the Winter Palace. Here resides during that severe but splendid season, the whole of the imperial family; and here are held the court, and all the public fêtes and festivals. Its architecture is not to be praised, being an enormous mass of bad taste; but its furniture is very noble, richly ornamented, though in rather an antiquated fashion. The dowager empress possesses the most elegant and comfortable suite of rooms it contains; and she has spared no expense to decorate the walls with excellent pictures. Murillio and Reynolds hold distinguished places in her selection; with some very superior landscapes and buildings by Robert, an artist, who though of the highest merit, is totally unknown in England. In a particular chamber of this huge palace, I was shown the crowns, sceptre, and other jewelled insignia of the imperial rank.

The Hermitage, which I before said belongs to this great structure, is connected with it by a gallery, thrown high in the air across a kind of street between the two buildings. It was in this minor palace that the great Catherine was wont to lay aside her purple, and with a few select friends forget that she was an empress, that the cares of a mighty state pressed upon her head, that her smile was fortune and her frown dismay. All spoke of ease and urbanity in these chambers, dedicated by her to pleasure and repose; and part of their fitting up was adapted to that design. It was here she received her favourites;

and with them enjoyed the true delight of mutual intercourse, unrestrained by regal forms, or public observation.

Being a friend to the fine arts, she adorned the walls of this mansion with many capital pictures; and to perfect the collection, at a considerable expense, added the Houghton gallery to her own. The pictures were not unpacked during her life; but were taken out and arranged under the auspices of her successor. Since that time the whole of the saloons in which they were hung have undergone a thorough repair and decoration; and, I am sorry to say, that the pictures also have past under this cruel purgatory. The rooms may be improved; but the paintings bear manifest proofs of the reverse. The practice, common in almost all countries, of periodical cleaning and varnishing the works of ancient and great masters, is ten thousand times more destructive of their durability and value than the hand of time. I am the more surprised at the fate of these, because they are under the inspection of men of judgment and experience: but custom is an imperious dictator, and so we must resign these monuments of departed genius, very soon to follow their authors into the land "where all things are forgotten!"

The founder of this great empire was the first in the country who introduced a love of pictures. His comprehensive mind embraced every object which promised usefulness, honour, or celebrity to his people: and by his example, the succeeding princes have opened their gates to genius; and we see on all sides, arts, manufactures and commerce, flourishing beneath their auspices.

I am told that it was in Holland and France Peter the Great imbibed his taste for painting. He passed many hours in their academies, talking with the artists, and examining with all the attention of a scholar, their various works. His favourite painters were of the Flemish school; particularly those who excelled in naval subjects, of which he was particularly fond. Adam Silo, being not only an artist but an old seaman, delighted him much by the exactness with which he depicted the ocean and its warlike scenes. Many of this man's pictures may be seen in the Summer Palace at St. Petersburgh; and for accuracy in

the shipping, and spirit in the sea-fights, I never saw him excelled. It was at the palace of Peterhoff that Peter framed the first general gallery of pictures that was known in Russia. The paintings were chosen and arranged by one Xsel, an artist who had followed the emperor from Holland, and who died painter to the empire, about sixty years ago. He was more celebrated for judgment than for genius, being little more than a copier of still life; but though as an artist he was insignificant, as a candid and liberal *connoisseur* he was of the first respectability.

From this great monarch's example has arisen the present admirable collection at the Hermitage, which is even better arranged than that of Peterhoff, having a separate room, as far as circumstances will allow, for the works of each particular master. One disadvantage attends this plan, if the superintendants are more attentive to uniformity than to truth: the names of artists are put on canvass which they never saw, much less ever touched. In the Salvator Rosa chamber, there are two exquisite pictures of his; the Prodigal Son, so well known in England, and a small sketch of Banditti, in his very best manner. Others are inferior; but some, too bad to be looked at, whose bastard faces bear his name without a line of his lineaments. Such prostitution of the character of a great artist, is either a shameful mistake, or a shameless imposition; and for taste and honour's sake should be rectified accordingly.

I pass many hours in culling the flowers from this wilderness of sweets; and I see enough to convince me that were it weeded with judgment, a collection might then be drawn together which would be unrivalled in any nation. With my pencil I noted on the spot my remarks on a few of the best pictures; and as you love the art sufficiently well to enjoy even a description of its specimens, I transcribe my little catalogue beneath.

The paintings most prominent in merit, were purchased by the late empress Catherine; and the most considerable of these is the Houghton Collection. In proportion as we admire the taste that dictated her munificence, we must shrink from the stigma it casts upon our countrymen, who once possessing such a treasure, would allow it to pass to a foreign land. However,

like the picture of some lamented hero for ever lost to his country, we have the portraits of this admirable gallery to remind us of what was once ours, and of our unavailing regrets. The taste of the late alderman Boydell has preserved copies of these paintings in many excellent drawings.

Most of the originals have undergone the destructive process of cleansing and varnishing; but some few have happily escaped, amongst which is the *Prodigal Son* of Salvator Rosa; a picture unrivalled in expression, truth, and depth of tone.

The *Forge of Vulcan*, by Lucco Giordano, was not so fortunate. But an exquisite piece of harmonious colouring it must originally have been. Parts of the picture are admirable; in others the cleaner is apparent. Some of the figures at the anvil, have lost the mellow tint so beautiful in their companions; leaving a raw, crude and bright pink hue, which destroys all the pleasure produced in regarding the more perfect parts.

The truly renowned picture of *the Holy Doctors of the Church*, by Guido, so finely engraved by Mr. Sharp, is also, like that of Salvator Rosa, in *statu quo;* and a most divine work it is. Perhaps its being situated by the side of so many florid and bustling productions, may to some eyes give it too cold and clayey a hue; however I must say that with me this sobriety much increases its sublimity. In the same saloon are one or two delightful Murillios, particularly a *Flight into Egypt.*

The room appropriated to Teniers, contains some of his very best pictures; amongst which are a *Country Wake* (a subject which he always treated so truly), the *inside of a kitchen, larder, &c.* replete with every article of culinary use, as well as vegetables, meat, and game of all sorts, with a portrait of the master of the house and (I suppose) his purveyor. Many inimitable little pictures of *cabarets*, display his usual skill in pourtraying his countrymen in all states of hilarity and drunkenness.

Bergham's pencil is not less brilliant. Yet there is one picture attributed to him, in execution below his merits, or in subject beyond his powers. If it be really his, how does it prove that even the finest geniuses will lose themselves when

they attempt to change the bent of nature, and climb by a different path to the heights of fame! The work that gave rise to this remark, is a very large one of *Europa and Jupiter*. But alas, the beloved of Jove possesses little charms to attract mortals! She is fat and ugly; and her attendants, not to outshine their mistress, are of the same clumsy and disgusting mould. Even the bull is an inferior animal. In short the artist has failed throughout. The design, the colouring, the composition, all are bad. You cannot discover one merit; no trace of Berghem's accustomed bewitching touch, not a tone in the least clear, not a glimpse of his usual and unequalled manner of treating nature.

Both the Wouvermans have given to this collection the most exquisite specimens of their art. Philip's *Skirmish near a Church* is inexpressibly brilliant. And a *Dutch Sport*, in which a boor is riding at a cat suspended in the air, is, though a barbarous subject, finished with the purest taste. The hue is of a most delightful silvery tone; and such is the fascination of the whole, that it is difficult to withdraw from the contemplation of so beautiful and perfect a work. Near to one of the windows is a small *Deer Hunt*, wherein a hunter, habited in red and mounted on a white horse, is touched with a force that is quite astonishing, and in a freer manner than is usually the style of Philip Wouverman. I ascribe its unsullied freshness to its having escaped the withering effects of varnish and scrubbing.

A saloon, containing several Rembrandts of a large size, forms a glorious *coup-d'œil:* and probably they appear to more advantage, having as a contrast, some infamous works of Ferdinand Bols; to which are ignorantly affixed marks, with the name of the great master of the Dutch school. A large picture by Rembrandt, of the *Prodigal Son's return*, is in his usual style, rich but ungraceful; full of character, but not of the epic mould, a *burgomaster's head* stares you in the face; and you stare at it in concert, with surprise, conviction, and astonishment; certain of its unequalled merit, and scarcely believing it to be a work of art.

A gallery, which is very long, is filled with pictures from

various masters; namely, Claude Lorraine, Nicolas and Gasper Poussin, Vernet, Le Brun, Le Sueur, and many others.

Claude has productions here which are nature's self. He seems to have gained the summit of his art. But if, while we contemplate him with feelings bursting into enthusiasm, our eyes stray for a moment around, the admiration is divided; and we see other artists, in their different paths, keep even with the wheels of his chariot, as they mount the hill of fame.

The genius of the Flemish school is shown in many excellent works of Rubens, Snyders and Vandyke. Several portraits of our ancestors, from the pencil of the latter, decorate the walls of the Hermitage. We here see the daughters of Charles I.; that monarch himself, in a suit of armour; Sir Thomas Wharton, besides many of the English nobility and statesmen. A *St. Sebastian* and the *Incredulity of St. Thomas*, are noble pictures from the same hand.

Rubens displays his old favourite subjects of Silenus, Tigers, and squabby Nymphs: a most abominable selection: and when we view the admirable richness and brightness of his colouring, how do we lament that so much talent should be thrown away upon the most disgusting objects in and out of nature.

Ruysdale presents us with a perfect cold and gloomy scene. Its principal object is a waterfall, so excellently executed as to seem literally tumbling before you with all the effects of a cataract. It is not sublime; but it is unaffected, and true to its subject. The longer you observe its beauties, the more is your attention riveted.

On the opposite side, in the same apartment, is a masterpiece of Potter. A wood, with a man on horseback issuing from it. The sun shines through the trees and gleams partially on a rutty road. This is inimitable; and with the picture last mentioned, forms two of the best landscapes of this character, in the Hermitage. What David Teniers is in humble life, to the sublime scenes of Poussin and Salvator Rosa; so are Ruysdale and Potter to Claude Lorraine. One, is nature in her common dress; the other, when she puts on her epic garb. Both styles suit the genius of their respective masters.

Countless specimens of other artists are dispersed all over the palace; but passing by many very indifferent, and more that disgrace the walls, I have selected those only which are deemed worthy of the august patroness who formed the collection. Leaving you to con their merits, I shall now rest my pen, and bid you *adieu!*

LETTER VI.

St. Petersburgh, September, 1805.

BEING still on the Muses' highway, allow me to lead you across the Neva to one of its proudest ornaments, the Institution for the encouragement of the Arts! The first idea of such a foundation was projected by the father of his country, the immortal Peter the great. The empress Elizabeth, in the year 1758, made many advances towards the fulfilment of his plan; but before the preliminary circumstances could be arranged, death put a period to her reign. The honour now fell to the lot of her successors: and the present extensive scale of the institution was designed and executed by the patriotic mind of the great Catherine. In 1764, it was finished and fully endowed; receiving from its foundress, proper laws to regulate the whole.

The establishment consists of a president, three rectors, two assistant rectors; six professors of painting, sculpture, and architecture, with each an assistant, and one perpetual secretary. One inspector of the college, with his assistant; an adequate number of professors of perspective, anatomy, geography, history, mythology, and iconology: and a number, unlimited, of academicians; admitting artists of all nations to that honour.

This institution is formed to watch and assist the bent of genius from its infancy; and yet, out of the number which are taken in here, very few come forth good artists. The fault then must lie in the minds of the pupils, which seem altogether barren of that talent which particularly points towards painting.

And where genius is not in some degree implanted by nature, I fear all the tuition in the world will never force it to any strength or beauty. Though this disappointing result is to be regretted, still the college is of incalculable service, as it instructs many (who would otherwise be ignorant) in the duties of a virtuous and useful citizen.

Sixty children are received at the age of five years; none above six. They must be free; and in the case of their being originally slaves, the nobleman to whom they belong, if he wishes to rear an architect, a sculptor, or a painter, and have him educated here, he must first accompany the child with a passport of his liberty. Every attention requisite for that tender age, is paid to the children; but when once they are registered in the college, it is impossible on any pretence, to draw them thence again, till the period of their pupilage is terminated. For the three first years, they are instructed in the duties of religion, taught their own and foreign languages, the rudiments of drawing, and the elements of architecture. From the age of nine till twelve they go deeper into these researches, with the addition of geography, history and astronomy. From twelve till they reach their fifteenth year, they study mathematics, the principles of physics and natural history; and penetrate still farther into the mystery of the sciences. In each of the classes the genius of the youth is watched: and, should the instructors be men of discernment, much useless fatigue to themselves and their pupils might be saved, by observing in proper time the bias of the latter to any particular pursuit. Thus talents would not be thwarted by being thrust into contrary paths; and the ardour of the student would increase, as he found the obstacles removed which lay between him and his aim. Independent of every pains being taken to embellish these young men in all the accomplishments of education, lessons of piety and morals are most assiduously sown in their minds. The true source of the sublime in the arts, being laid in the mental greatness of the professor, no labour is spared to render the pupils of this college as admirable in private conduct as they hope to be in public reputation. Must we not pause to admire so excellent a plan! How broad are the views on which it is founded! Not merely

to teach youth to be artists, but to be men; to be useful citizens; to bless the country in which they were born; and to spread her glory with their own fame! Nay, not to stop even there; but in forming men to eternize their names here, it gives them a bright earnest of immortality hereafter. So far does the imperial eagle carry her sons! Nothing little, or contracted, is found in this munificent establishment. No care nor interruption arises to damp the ardour of the student; no ideas pervade his mind but those of improvement, emulation, and the prosecution of his favourite pursuit.

In order to estimate the progress of the growing geniuses, an examination, before the heads of the academy, takes place every six months. From the report of the masters, and specimens of the young people's particular efforts in the different departments of their study, a register is made of their conduct and abilities; and they are accordingly either praised for assiduity, or reprimanded for neglect. Rewards are distributed in the form of prints, &c. Having passed from the college into the academy of fine arts (which is considered as the last stage of their education), they are then carefully examined once every month, and their progress duly entered on the records of the school. As an incitement to emulation, medals of silver and gold are distributed, of various sizes and weights, according to the merit of the candidates. When the whole of their education, both in the college and in the academy, is completed, the assembly, or council, honours them with the gift of a sword, accompanied with an attestation of their freedom; in virtue of which they are authorized to exercise their profession wherever they may deem it proper. This foundation, like that of our own, sends a certain number of artists to study in those countries which we regard as the native seat of the arts. The term of their election is every three years. Twelve is the number selected; and they are chosen out of the students who have already been distinguished with medals. When abroad, they keep a journal; and every four months, send the academy a regular account of their progress and occupations. At the expiration of a stated time they send to St. Petersburgh specimens of their improvement, either a design of their own, or some ex-

cellent copy of a statue, picture, or building; after the reception of which, money is sent to enable them to return. From that period they cease to be pensioners of the academy; and are eligible to become members, or professors in the institution. All who leave this establishment without giving adequate proofs of genius, are placed out under respectable tradesmen and artisans.

In order to give you a just idea of the magnitude of this institution, you must remember that it embraces in the fullest extent of the several arts, architecture, sculpture, painting, casting in bronze, medals, and engraving in every branch, including gems. From the extent of the building you may imagine how noble are its schools. The finest models and drawings of every celebrated architectural relic, are here to be found. Casts of the most admired statues of antiquity are placed in large saloons; and for pictures, the precious gallery of the Hermitage is open to their study. A handsome chapel for the devotions of the students, is in the interior of the edifice; as is also a well-furnished and extensive library. Nothing is omitted as too minute, which can promote their improvement; or awaken the virtuous ambition of talents deserving distinction.

An annual exhibition of the works of the young artists is opened every July. Should I be in St. Petersburgh in that month, I shall then be able to form a pretty correct judgment of the growing state of all the arts in this metropolis; but at present I can only pronounce with any certainty upon sculpture and architecture; and they appear to me to be in a very promising state. The little I have seen of the students in painting, gives me an opposite impression; and that, when we consider the institutions of their academy, is rather inexplicable. I have several times passed through the apartments where the young men work, and, as an artist, minutely examined their performances; but in none of them could I discern the germs of the future painter. I sought to explain this to myself, and found one very efficient cause in the bad examples which are ever before their eyes; and which they copy, as the standards of perfection. The walls, instead of being enriched with a few

excellent pictures, are disgraced with myriads of vile daubings by heaven knows who. Who are we to blame for this? Certainly not the imperial foundress, or her successors. The invaluable saloons of the Hermitage are ever open to the students of the academy. There they may study from morning until night; imbibing from the sublime works of Michael Angelo and Raphael, the very fountain of taste and improvement. These they neglect; or, rather I should say, the professors never introduce them to even a glimpse of such great originals. Why, I cannot pretend to tell you; but so it is: and thus, for want of the same plan which prevails in the schools of sculpture and architecture, the whole of the expense lavished on that of painting, is little better than absolutely wasted. Where manifest want of genius, and bad instructions are united, nothing but disappointment can be the result. Able teaching and industry may give respectable proficiency to the most moderate capacities; and it is as well known, that bad examples will corrupt and destroy the finest talents that ever were in man.

Before the architect and the sculptor are the best lessons. We see a vast number of models in cork (done by the same artist who executed those in the British Museum), of the most perfect remains in ancient Rome: also an immense model of St. Peter's, finished with scrupulous exactness. Though far from maturity, no one who looks around this superb city, will say that architecture is in its infancy: the Kazan church, and other public buildings, being all from the designs of Russian artists. But sculpture seems to me to have even been more rapid in her advances.

Many are the students who have accomplished pieces of admirable workmanship: but the academy has to boast of one that might be regarded with honour by any nation. Mr. Martauze. He is indebted to the institution at St. Petersburgh for his early education; for its perfection, is obliged to Italy and his own genius. He has produced an Acteon that would grace the most classic ages; and several funeral monuments of equal merit and Grecian taste. This gentleman has studied the beauties of ancient sculpture with the best disciplined judgment. He has not permitted his admiration of their graces to deceive

him in their defects. With the nicest discrimination he has drawn the delicate line between them; and exemplifies by his own performances, that a statue may possess all the simplicity which is the characteristic of the best antiques, without falling into those stiffnesses and unnatural peculiarities which some mistake for perfections. His professional engagements at present are numerous: but his work of the greatest promise, is a colossal statue of John the Baptist. It is about fifteen feet high; is to be cast in bronze; and placed, with many others executed by the same hand, on the exterior of the new metropolitan church. The design possesses all the divine majesty and power of action so eminently conspicuous in the character of the great prophet. Indeed I look on every work of this distinguished artist, with growing admiration: and I must say that, distinguished as similar talents are in England, we have not in that country a superior sculptor to Mr. Martauze.

While I am on this subject, I will present you at the Taurida palace; not to emperors and princes, but to some of the finest specimens of antiquity which have been preserved. This noble mansion was once the residence of the magnificent Potemkin; and in it he gave that entertainment to his imperial mistress, so celebrated for costliness and eastern grandeur.

The statues are now its most attractive ornament. And a most invaluable one is that of a Venus, given to Peter the great by the then coeval pope. The Medicean Venus, the standard of perfection in female form, does not, in many points (if I dare make the assertion!) surpass this of the Taurida. The attitude of both is similar; but that of the one I am now studying, possesses the most grateful *tournure* imaginable, united with a symmetry of form, and majesty of mien not to be described: and with all this, there is a lightness, a breathing action throughout the figure which the de Medici never knew. That, also glorious, proof of human genius, seems in a fixed, and rather painful position; particularly when viewing it in profile: and likewise impresses you with a heavy *tout ensemble* in the lower extremities. The Tauridean Venus has here the advantage: her legs and feet are exquisitely proportioned; so much elegance, such delicacy and soft flow of line, so much

refined and natural beauty, I never before gazed upon. The body is that of the most perfect outline of a lovely woman: its gradual stealing undulations, impart such enchantment to the eye in dwelling on its form, that it is only the want of colour which dissolves the illusion, and reminds you that it does not exist. So far it excels the Venus de Medici; and as a whole is certainly the most pleasing: but there are parts where that "beauteous statue" again gains her ascendency. The head and neck of the Tauridean are evidently too small; and yet the same inimitable grace which charms in the figure pervades these also. The original arms are lost; and those substituted in their stead are so vile, that it is a disgrace to the palace in which the statue stands; and, as long as they are endured, a memento of the infamy of the artist who had the impudence so wretchedly to attempt their restoration. The effect is so bad, from their enormous disproportion, that many might pass this beautiful specimen of antiquity as a thing unworthy of notice. I measured the height of both Venuses, and found the Tauridean was taller than the Medicean by two inches. Do not fancy from this comparison, that the Venus which has been so long the object of our joint admiration, is fallen in my esteem. Far from it: I do not think her less beautiful, though I may consider her rival as more so. And yet I am not presuming enough to guide your taste on this subject; or, indeed, that of any other person. But perhaps it will be a support to my opinion, when I tell you that Mr. Martauze, the justly celebrated Russian sculptor, regards this statue with an admiration equally enthusiastic as my own. However, your eyes shall be your judge; as I intend to bring a cast of it to England, and present it as a mark of my respect to the Royal Academy at Somerset House.* It will be an acquisition to the student, and a great ornament to the antique school. The preservation of the original is not good: the marble is discoloured, and partially worn by time. The head has also suffered; but not sufficient materially to injure the loveliness and divine expression which reigns throughout.

* The circumstances under which the author left Russia, obliged him to leave this cast with others at St. Petersburgh.

The next relic of antiquity to which I would call your attention, is a colossal head of Achilles. It is heroically grand; possessing all the godlike qualities and manly beauties attributed to him by Homer. Nay, it even surpasses the idea of that immortal poet; for when we look on the heavenly greatness of this countenance, we deem it impossible that the mind which informed it, could be wrought to such a hurry of revenge and its brutal execution, as was wreaked upon the body of the brave and lifeless Hector. It wears a splendid casque with a high and superb crest. This bust is now removed, and placed in the Hermitage. I know not whether they have a cast of it in England; but at all events I shall bring one with the other of the Venus.

The second ornament of the Taurida palace is a figure of Hercules, holding a club in his left hand, and the Hesperian fruit in his right. The head and body, as well as the right thigh, are perfect; and the rest admirably restored. It differs totally from the Farnese god; and though not above seven feet high, what remains of the original, proves it to have been the work of the most glorious era of Greece. The head is crowned with a wreath; perhaps a branch from the Hesperian tree, as an additional badge of his victory.

As you read this account of the classic treasures of Russia, you will perhaps fancy, that if I improve by such models, as much as I blame those who do not, I shall return to England a modern Apelles! We need not be ashamed of the ambition that points at excellence; hence I avow mine, and assure you that with me, such advantages shall not be cast on a barren soil. At present, I have drawn more fire than frost from this northern atmosphere; and I hope my pencil will discover it to your eyes, when we meet.

The vast apartment in which the relics I have just described are placed, is well pourtrayed by Carr; and his little sketch gives a just idea of its appearance.

Before you enter the hall, or gallery of the palace, you pass through a saloon of great magnitude, which is supported by immense white pillars, and ornamented with ancient candalabrums, sarcophaguses, busts, vases, and other decorations of

the classic ages. With these admirable specimens of departed genius, are mingled the monstrous associates of modern ill-fashioned cupids, negroes, fantastic heads, and hideous whirligigged pedestals of fifty-coloured marbles. My disgust at this sight, can only be compared to your sensations, should a group of asses burst in with their horrid brayings, amidst the soul-entrancing sounds of spheric harmony.

On leaving this enormous vestibule, the hall opens at once upon the eye, and excites an emotion which must be felt to be imagined; to describe it is beyond my powers. I had not an opportunity of measuring this apparently measureless place, and therefore will not pretend to guess at its dimensions. A double range of Ionic columns, rise like a forest on either side; and when you look up to their capitals, the height is so great as almost to pain the eye. But there, the sublimity of this gigantic chamber ceases. A poverty-stricken, flat ceiling, with little insignificant urns in a squeezed shape, finish most abruptly, what might otherwise have been perfection. Had it been arched, the effect would have been unequalled in Europe. Between the pillars are placed statues; most of them modern and of indifferent merit. Some fine imitations of the Barbarinii and other celebrated vases, are mixed with them; and at each end of the gallery, at some distance from the wall, are two excellent copies of the Laocoon and Cleopatra.

Through the long avenue of columns, is opened to your view a most delightful scene. A spot dedicated to perpetual summer. Here all the sweets of Arabia, mingling with European taste, woo the senses to an exhaustless banquet. In this garden, the frigid airs of winter never breathe: all is warmth and balmy softness. Trees, fruits, and flowers, fill up the fragrant assemblage, and court you into walks winding through many a luxuriant maze of oranges, myrtles, and clustering vines. Whilst straying in so delicious an atmosphere, and surrounded by the foliage of a hundred groves, flowers springing at your feet, and scenting a perfume which *takes the captive soul and laps it in Elysium*, how are the senses dissolved! It seems the power of enchantment; as if we were lost in Armida's garden, and there forgot every thing but pleasure and repose. On emerging from

this earthly paradise, like leaves of the sensitive plant, the feelings are driven back upon themselves. For a few moments you cannot guess the cause: but looking round, the pale face of winter and its bleak attendants, lifeless trees, and drifting snows, soon explain the mystery, and account for the surprise.

During the short summer of this country, the pleasure-grounds which surround the palace, wear a very charming appearance. They are laid out in the English style; having extensive shrubberies, romantic walks, rustic retreats, hothouses and conservatories, as well as every other feature in a British garden. For these beauties, the imperial family are indebted to the taste and exertions of Mr. Gould, an Englishman, who has long resided in St. Petersburgh; and who plans and superintends all its most distinguished works of this nature. He is the Repton of Russia. His true English honesty, excellent heart, and hospitality, claim the esteem of all ranks; and add a still firmer decision to that respect for the British character already awarded to it by the generous admiration of the Russian empire. Here, the word of an Englishman is held as sacred as the bond of any other foreigner: and the veneration which the people pay to the nation at large, is most emphatically proved by the friendship they evince to every subject of Britain who lands on their shores. Cold I may have felt this country, but never the hearts of its inhabitants to your affectionate friend.

LETTER VII.

St. Petersburgh, September, 1805.

IN a letter I received sometime ago, you desired me not to omit seeing the church of Saint Alexander Nefsky. I have obeyed you; and beg you to accompany me through its consecrated aisles. All that we see in this city which is interesting, must excite our veneration from circumstance, not age. Not a stone of its present fabric was laid, much more than a century ago: so, as I cannot speak, either of the antiquity, or peculiar grandeur of this shrine to the illustrious Saint, I will first awaken your interest in giving you a little sketch of his character.

He flourished about the middle of the thirteenth century, not bearing the title of Tzar of Russia, but that of Prince of Novgorod. The desolation of the Russian empire, brought on by the victories and ravages of the Tartars, prompted its neighbours to seek a share in the spoil. But Alexander, to whom his father Yaroslaf had resigned the government of Novgorod, met a formidable army of invading Danes on the banks of the Neva. He encountered them; and not only drove them off the field with great slaughter, but compelled the fugitives to make a hasty retreat into their own country. From this signal victory, he obtained the surname of Nefsky. Returning a conqueror to Novgorod, instead of being welcomed with plaudits, jealousy and suspicion surrounded him. Fearing that his high fame should incline him to stretch his prerogative and injure their liberties, the citizens caballed amongst themselves how to limit his present power, and finding that impracticable, most ungratefully rose in open rebellion. Alexander was forced to retire; and full of indignation, applied to his father, who had assumed the government of Vladimir. The venerable prince assigned to him the jurisdiction of Perciaslavl, and sent another of his sons to Novgorod. But no sooner had Alexander withdrawn, than they found the palladium of their safety had departed with him. The Danes being apprised of what had

happened, raised new levies, and pouring in upon Novgorod, attacked the city with great fury. The new prince was not successful in his attempts to check the enemy; and the people in despair, sent a deputation to the dauntless Alexander, to implore his forgiveness, and petition for his return. Their treason could not be so easily forgotten, and the ambassadors brought back a refusal. Entreaties were sent a second time, with the Archbishop at their head; upon which great humility Alexander complied; relieved the besieged city of Novgorod; and not only repulsed the enemy, but even pushed on to Livonia, and gained a decisive victory over the Germans, Danes, and Tchudes, on the borders of the Peipus lake. The fame of these new exploits of the heroic prince soon reached the ears of the Tartar Khan, who was then, in some measure, the dictator of all the principalities of Russia. When Alexander's father the grand-prince Yaroslaf was dead, the Khan invited the young warrior to the horde; and there, as he had before honoured Yaroslaf, created him grand-prince of Russia, and caused him to mount the throne in the great city of Vladimir. Secure of the friendship of the Khan, he now turned all his thoughts towards clearing his country of the neighbouring ravagers; with a great force he undertook an expedition against Sweden, and happily acquired new laurels in every step he marched, and returned to his country laden with spoils and glory. Meanwhile the rest of the princes of this vast empire, each in his separate territory finding himself oppressed by the idea of bearing any other yoke than his own will, resolved to unite and make a general attack upon the Tartars. The Khan hearing of this plot before it was ripe, sent to all these princes to immediately attend him at the horde, saying he required their assistance in a matter of great consequence. It was easily perceived that this was only a feint to deprive the principalities of their sovereigns, and so render them more entirely under the subjection of the Khan. The princes, therefore, all refused; but Alexander apprehending dire consequences from such obstinacy, and relying on the friendship of the Khan for himself, conceived the adventurous resolution of repairing quite alone to the horde; and there, by prudent submission appease the aroused anger of their chief. He resolved

to make the dangerous attempt: and should even the Khan's vengeance make him the victim of his wrath, provided it might end there, he would be happy so to expiate the crime of his rash country. This patriotic prince was obliged to remain a full year amongst the Tartars, before he could appease the indignation of the Khan. At length, after many an unsuccessful application, he received the act of amnesty from the offended chief; and was allowed to return into Russia to inform the princes that all was forgiven. But whether the Khan repented of his clemency, or the jealousy of the Tartar princes had prepared his fate, cannot be ascertained at this period, but it is well known that he died of poison long before he reached his own principality.

His life having been passed in deeds of arms and of piety, his memory was regarded with veneration; and enthusiasm reported that a number of miracles had been wrought at his tomb. On this he was canonized: and Peter the First, in order to hallow his new city in the minds of the people, brought the remains of the sainted hero to a shrine within it, over which he erected the church consecrated to his name. There is an order of knighthood instituted to the honour of Alexander, which is so highly respected as to be borne by several of the sovereigns who have been allies with Russia.

The monastery which boasts the patronage of this illustrious saint, is inhabited by sixty monks; whose ways, I fancy, are not a tittle more active or useful than those of their brethren in other countries. Never having passed under the temptations of busy life, perhaps they think that escaping the sins of the world is equivalent to doing good in it; and so they linger out their earthly pilgrimage, more like drones than members of the church militant. They are of the order of St. Basil; as indeed are most of the *religieuse* of this empire.

The quadrangles and long-stretching walls, proclaim the extent of the building. It is large without being grand, and possesses no true architectural ornament whatever. The sides are gaily painted with red and yellow in arches and pillars; a taste that was early prevalent in Russian cities. Strange as such a fancy appears to us, I have no doubt of its being a relief to the

tye during the long season of a northern winter, when every object is clothed in one mass of white for so many months. The edifice dedicated to the saint, stands high amid the surrounding depths of clumsy buildings. It is of a peculiar architecture, composed of the Tartarian and Greek styles; finely gilded, and as usual most gorgeously painted. The inside is in the same *gusto*, and a few bad copies of Italian pictures cover its walls. Their subjects are, a portrait of Peter the Great, and the achievements of Saint Alexander. The shrine of the hero is of massive silver, constructed of piles of military trophies and religious devices, arising to an immense height. A sort of sarcophagus, covered with a rich gold and jewelled pall, silver candalabrums, and well arranged relics from the holy land, form the decorations of this spot; presenting a most magnificent and striking spectacle. I never have seen any thing resemble it in wealth, excepting the silver chamber in the palace at Berlin; which, by the way, has since been told me, is merely show and a substitute for the reality. Frederic the Great, during the seven years war, converted the largest part of this metal into dollars; leaving wooden models of the original treasure, slightly silvered, as a deceiving representative of what once had been. Until you are told of the cheat, the imitation is so well effected, that on a merely passing view it is impossible to discover the difference.

On one side of the church, being a most solemn contrast to the imperial shrine, lie the remains of a bishop, covered with a dark canopy of crimson velvet. A gold cross is embroidered on the centre of the pall, which is spread over the coffin. Relics and golden candlesticks are also dedicated to the departed; and the whole forms a gloom truly impressive and sepulchral.

By giving you a description of the interior of this church, you may have a just idea of every other in the empire, as they are all fitted up according to one design.

The entrance is generally through a portico, by a pair of large folding doors. These lead to the main body of the building, which is a clear expanse; excepting the columns only, which support the roof or dome. No seats of any description are admitted. Every individual stands during divine service,

occasionally altering the position to kneeling or touching the ground with the head, according to the prescribed sacred ceremonies. About ten yards from the entrance, and directly in a line with it, is the sanctum sanctorum. It is elevated on several steps which are covered with a rich carpet, and only trodden by the holy feet of the priesthood. This inner temple is divided from the outer space, wherein the congregation assemble to their devotions, by a high screen magnificently carved and gilded, with compartments containing paintings from the New Testament and the legends of modern saints. In general these pictures are very miserable; none but professors of the Greek church being allowed to decorate the churches: and you already have my opinion of the state of this branch of the arts in Russia. In the centre of the screen is a folding door of bronze fretwork, in which is variously represented the Holy Ghost with the other divine persons; and through it may be seen the altar, its holy chalice, crucifix and bible; all superbly jewelled and hung with gold fringe. Every church has this inner chapel, so similar to the *Holy of Holies* in the ancient ritual of Jerusalem; and from which, according to the arrangement of the Greek ceremonies, on hallowed days the priests issue, and with much solemnity, perform divers sacred functions. There is something very impressive in the whole of this service. When the splendid habits, like the costly decorations of Aaron, and the venerable figures of the priests appear; while we observe the devotion of all around, a peculiar emotion seizes the soul impossible to describe. In the boors we see a simple and devout ardour: they pray and cross themselves with an earnestness that is truly gratifying. At the moment, we conceive the most favourable sentiments of them: for however ignorant men may be in other respects, when once they know the nature of the Almighty Being, and are sensible of standing before his omniscient eye, a salutary awe fills their minds; and integrity is as naturally its growth, as the corn is from the ground in which the seed has been sown. The more elevated ranks are not so religiously attentive as these humble rustics: during divine service they hold conversations with each other, at the same instant they are making the sacred signs on their

persons with the two forefingers of the left hand. The music is fine, has much simplicity, and is all vocal. They who chant are not seen, which gives a more charming effect to the voices. The sight of figures and faces, often not in harmony with the strains they produce, excites a discordancy in the feelings, very inimical to those holy aspirations, which, accompanying the sacred breathings of the voice, raise the soul in rapture to heaven. The most celebrated church in St. Petersburgh, for fine singing, is the Maltese chapel; and there it is of the most exquisite melodies.

On entering the monastery of Alexander Nefsky, you see a small church on one side of the way leading to the grand area. It is vaulted and gloomy, and well informs the traveller that it is the mansion of the dead. Here are several cells in which are the tombs of departed great men. These monuments are in general badly executed; one only I can except, and that is of bronze, and composed and finished in a very superior manner. I could not learn the name of the artist.

The primary object of my visit to this sepulchral abode, was a desire to see the grave of the renowned Suwarroff. About four feet from the pavement, on the left hand side of one of these vaults, which is used as a chapel, is placed against the wall a small brass plate, on which is engraved in the Russa language,

HERE LIES SUWARROFF!

A more comprehensive epitaph could not have been chosen. On these words meeting the eye, his greatness and extraordinary life rush at once upon the mind; and we feel, from this sublime appeal, the whole force of his character with a conviction which a thousand volumes of eulogy could not increase nor more confirm. Many instances might be brought, to show how happy the Russians are in this kind of short, natural, and Spartan expression. On a medal, struck in the reign of Catherine II, in honour of a great victory, and presented to the officers and soldiers who distinguished themselves in the battle, this was written under the emblems of conquest. I WAS THERE. The sense of which is more pointed in the Russian tongue, it

being there expressed in one word. The simplicity of this style is great as the empire, and strikes like its own gigantic rocks. Polish it with the refinements of art, and though ornament may be acquired, its sublimity would be lost. Such a mode of speech proves a certain grandeur in the minds of the people. Greatness is perceived at once; and like faithful mirrors reflecting what is before them, they pronounce the merit full, and in a word. What men easily feel and readily admire, they are not far from imitating.

In the vaulted apartments of this dreary structure are stoves, in order to heat them; an accommodation which would gladly be dispensed with, as the penetrating vapour puts every dormant smell on the alert, filling the air with scents, musty and pestiferous, exhaled from the mouldering coffins of embalmed heroes, princes, and statesmen. In one of these sepulchres was formerly deposited the body of the unfortunate Peter III, the father of the late emperor. When Paul ascended the throne he caused the remains of this imperial victim to be taken up, in order to be reburied, in the church of the fortress, the cemetery of his ancestors. The perpetrators of the murder were summoned to the ceremony, and obliged to watch the coffin day and night for three weeks. There were not more than two penitents (if penitents they were!) as the rest of the assassins were all dead. I do not envy the feelings which must, in these moments, have occupied their breasts. Horror of their crime, and fear of immediate death after the funeral, must have been ever before them. Indeed, if time, or hardness of heart, had not blunted their remorse, the present punishment was a torture more grievous than the most instantaneous public execution. They walked in the procession as chief mourners: a situation neither of them expected, after a lapse of so many years, to fill. There is something extraordinary and great in the mode of punishment: and also much to be admired in so strong a testimony of Paul's affection for the memory of his father. But there are many who do not give his heart any credit for this transaction; considering it rather as an act of hostility against the name of his mother. If they be right, the complexion of the affair is totally changed; and what before

stood as an act of filial piety, is now abhorred as the violent caprice of an undutiful son. What supports this opinion, are the proofs he gave at different times of hatred to her memory, in the total disregard of all her public plans, and the disgrace in which he involved her best ministers.

This prince's actions are too well known, and have sufficiently marked his extravagant character, to require my enlarging on them here. The people groaned beneath his yoke; and few, if any tears followed him to his grave. How different is the aspect of the nation and its sovereign at this moment! Individual safety and comfort are seen on every side. The real good of the subject in the monarch's breast, and the firmest confidence in him on the part of the people, form the peace and security of all. A heart like that of the amiable Alexander, when guided by wise counsels, cannot fail to render himself and the millions under his rule, prosperous and happy. He is now absent from his capital; but not on a party of summer pleasure. He is gone to front the enemy of Europe; and we have little doubt but that, if he be properly supported by his allies, he will make that far-stretching conqueror confess the might that lies in a righteous cause. Did we live in the days of superstition, we should suppose, from the wonderful fortune which attends this scourge, that he fought under an enchanted banner; but there is a period when success must fail the man who makes his glory the desolation of mankind. Interest and self-preservation are strong incitements; they will be generally felt, and ere long he must be destroyed by those very evils recoiling on himself with which his rapacity and ambition have sought to overwhelm the world. But, as he is, men look on him with wonder; and his most mortal foes must declare that were he as good as he is great, he would be irresistible. Doubly great must he be who ever makes this extraordinary victor lower his crest and acknowledge an equal, if not a superior. Alas! that talents cannot see the noblest crown is virtue!

LETTER VIII.

St. Petersburgh, September, 1805.

MY DEAR FRIEND,

HAVING detained you so long amongst the aisles and cloisters of the church, it is just that I should lead you to the rest within; and having placed you at the foot of the altar, open the book containing its holy ordinances.

The religion of Russia is that of the eastern or Greek Church. It allows the most liberal toleration; no person being excluded from any office under government on account of his religious tenets. The only restrictions are, that the imperial family must profess the Greek faith; and all Russians who have once entered its pale cannot lawfully depart from it. As the church in question is of higher antiquity than any other distinction amongst christians, so its doctrines prevail over some of the widest tracks in christendom. They are professed through the greatest part of Greece, the Grecian Isles, Moldavia, Wallachia, Egypt, Nubia, Lybia, Arabia, Mesopotamia, Syria, Cilicia, and Palestine, the whole of the Russian empire in Europe, Siberia in Asia, Astracan, Casan, Georgia, and several other countries.

The princess Olga, grandmother to Vladimir the great, was the first person of distinction in Russia who was converted to christianity. She went to Constantinople to be baptized; and was led to the font by the eastern emperor Constantine Porphyrogenneta, who gave her the name of Helen; and sent her back to her country laden with relics and costly presents. Her son the fierce Sviatoslaf, refused to abjure his pagan gods; and Vladimir, her no less ferocious grandson, paid as little respect to her religious zeal. What parental anxiety could not effect, in the course of a few years afterwards was so ably compassed, as to cause the prince not only to become a convert himself, but to accomplish the holy conviction of the most considerable families in the empire. He too received the seal of the cross before the altars of Constantinople; and from thence, with a christian bride, the sister of the emperor, brought priests and

learned teachers to instruct the whole nation in the doctrines of the Greek church. Thus was one of the most sanguinary worshippers of idolatry transformed at once by the religion of peace, into a powerful but mild assertor of the charities of Heaven. Mark how strong is the difference between Vladimir pagan and Vladimir christian. In the early part of his sway, while as grand-prince he was carrying conquest to the very extremities of Russia, he resolved to return thanks to the savage gods of his country for the victory granted to his arms, by sacrificing on their altars the prisoners whom he had taken during the war. His courtiers still more barbarous in their piety, were not content with the smoking blood of so many of their fellow-creatures, but they told Vladimir that a victim selected from amongst his own people would greatly enhance the homage paid to the propitious deities. He approved the hint, and pitched on a young man, the son of a venerable christian, and professing the same faith. The unhappy father refused to yield up the victim. The monarch, enraged at what he deemed sacrilege, and at his commands being disputed, ordered the doors of the house to be forced. He was obeyed; and the father and son furiously immolated in each other's arms. Not satisfied with this diabolical rite, Vladimir ordered the number of idols to be increased in the city of Kief; and erected a new and superb statue to the goddess Perune in the principality of Novgorod. Soon after those heathen acts a Greek sage appeared at his court; and gaining his ear, in a very impressive manner so discoursed of the truth of the christian dispensation, reasoning of righteousness, temperance, and judgment to come, that the monarch trembled, declared his faith in what he heard; and following the holy man to the font, received the name of Basilius, and "leaving in the sacred water the leprosy with which his vices had covered him, came forth a character as pure as infancy." Indeed the change which took place in him from that hour, seems almost miraculous. He broke down the idols throughout the empire. He put away his wives and concubines, to the number of eight hundred, and adhered to the princess Anna alone, the christian lady whom he had brought from Constantinople. He founded churches and schools; built cities; and

drawing the famishing savages from their huts and wild pursuits, planted them in these new dwellings, under the tuition of holy men, and the protection of his choicest officers. Even his prisoners, instead of being sacrificed to bloody idols, were sent to people the wastes of his empire. Every way he conducted himself not only as a sovereign who consulted the prosperity of his country, but as one who considered all mankind as his brethren. On great festivals he entertained at his own cost the inhabitants of his capital: and to them who, from disease or infirmity, could not attend the public tables, he sent a plentiful repast to their own homes. But even in cases of blood, when we might have supposed that the sanguinary scenes to which he had so long been accustomed, must altogther have blunted his feelings of compassion, we find that here too the religion of mercy had penetrated his heart. Being one day called upon to pass sentence for the immediate execution of a notorious robber, he exclaimed with much emotion,

"What am I, that I should condemn a fellow creature to death!" This sketch is sufficient to show that the lessons of the Greek sage had not been barren. They not only converted the prince, but by the mildness and wisdom of his reign (now that he had become christian) the people saw by the fruit that the tree was good; and in crowds they pressed towards the cross to receive its mark, and express with their devotion, gratitude towards their leader. Vladimir died at Berestof in the year 1015; and was honoured with the testimony of canonization to his piety.

I must now give you some idea of the doctrine of the Greek church. But as it is not necessary to particularize those articles in which all established churches agree, such as the propitiation, redemption, resurrection, &c. &c., I shall mention none but distinguishing points; as they only can show the difference between the Greek and other creeds. This church holds the doctrine of the Trinity, with the following variation from the common belief; namely that the Holy Ghost, instead of "proceeding from the Father and the Son," proceeds from "the Father only."

They admit the invocation of saints upon a principle very

refined, but sufficient, in their minds, to clear them from the charge of idolatry. Not as gods but as intercessors, they apply to these "spirits of the just made perfect;" asking their aid as powerful friends, rather than imploring their protection as almighty rulers. It is in this view that they invoke the virgin, the apostles, and other hallowed names which enrich the Greek calendar; offering up prayers and incense to them, in the like manner as men seek to propitiate the great of the earth by petitions and tributes of respect.

Pictures and images are used in the Greek church on a similar principle. No more than the last mentioned custom of paying homage to saints, infringes the first commandment, will it be allowed that these depictings of the divine persons break the second? They do not place the image or picture before the eyes of the congregation to be worshipped as the visible presence; but merely as a remembrancer, an awakener of the affections towards the heavenly beings of which they are similitudes. So far the explanation is good. There is nothing to be found fault with in the aim of the fathers who constituted these usages, but the means are dangerous. The enlightened mind understands the simplicity of christianity, and takes the rites of the church as they were intended. Not so the ignorant boor: accustomed to examine things more by impressions on his senses, than with the touchstone of reason, he cannot long think that "power belongeth to God alone," when he is hourly on his knees to invoke the meditation of a saint. And how can his soul continue to seek the invisible Father, when he finds his image in the temple, surrounded by prostrate devotees, and adorned with all the golden decorations of the most costly dedications? Removed from the presence of this graven deity, where does he think are the "eyes which are too pure to behold iniquity?" He has seen them closed up within the walls of some consecrated building; and fearless of observation, is ready to embrace the first temptation that crosses his path. The religion which is in spirit can alone happily affect the conduct of man. It strikes at the root of all evil, for it not only commands you to "cleanse the heart and not the garments," but assures you that God is neither confined to

temple, earth, nor heaven, but pervades the whole universe; and with his allseeing eye searcheth the depths of man. Viewing things in this light, is it requisite to have images of wood and of gold to remind us of the omnipresent and allgracious providence!

There are seven mysteries, or sacraments, in the Greek church, viz. baptism, the chrism (a rite peculiar to this church), the eucharist, confession, ordination, marriage, and the holy oil.

There are no peculiarities in the doctrine attached to the baptism, though there are some particularities in its ceremonies, which I shall describe.

On the very day on which a woman becomes a mother, the priest goes to her chamber and offers up a holy thanksgiving for her and the child. On the eighth day the infant is carried to the church and receives its name; that of the saint to which the day is dedicated, is given to the child, in addition to any other which the parents may have chosen. Two and thirty days after this, the purification of the mother is performed; a ceremony instituted in imitation of that of the virgin Mary. Then follows a service not limited to any particular time, since it must depend on the progress which the young christian has made in religious knowledge. It consists in renouncing the evil spirit; or, as we term it, the "devil and all his works."

Then succeeds the baptism itself, in which the professor practises the trine immersion. One immersion is of more modern date, and was first introduced in Spain; whence, on the authority of Pope Gregory the Great, it was spread throughout the Latin church. Aspersion is an antecedent usage; having been always adopted in cases of sickness, or danger of immediate dissolution; and being the easiest ceremony, is now generally practised in all protestant countries.

The chrism or sacred unction is the next rite. It is considered as the sealing of the Holy Ghost; and answers to confirmation in the church of Rome. It immediately follows the immersion at baptism, when the priest anoints the child or proselyte on the principal parts of the body, with the sign of the cross. Seven days after the application of this consecrated unction, the votary goes through the ceremony of ablu-

tion; and is now prepared for the concluding rite, called that of the tonsure. Simeon of Thessalonica gives us this explanation of the institution.

"After the chrism, that is the holy unction, the hair of the person's head is shorn in the form of the cross; because he then has Christ for his head: and because it is proper to pray uncovered, as Paul teaches. The tonsure is also a sign or mark, being cut crossways, that all vain and superfluous thoughts are from that time to be cut off. For this reason monks are entirely shorn; and it becometh a faithful christian to divorce himself from every thing superfluous and not absolutely necessary. Besides which, the hair is offered by the baptized person to Christ, as a sort of first-fruits, or the sacrifice of his body; the hair being as it were the exhalation of the whole body: the chief priest therefore does not carelessly throw it away, but lays it apart in a sacred place."

At the end of the baptism the priest usually ties a little cross of gold, or some other precious material, round the infant's neck. But this is not an ordinance of the church, though generally practised. It is a voluntary act of the parents or minister; and meant to be a memorial only to the child, of the spiritual cross he has now assumed.

It hath been well said that they who adopt opinions without reason, and against reason, cannot be cured by argument; and besides, as I am not a divine, I shall make no remark on faith in transubstantiation. It is the declared belief of the present Greek church; having been insinuated into its originally comparative simplicity, by the subtlety of Peter Mogilas, metropolitan of the Ukraine. He drew his notions from the schools established by Gregory the Fifteenth at Rome; whence he returned, to propagate the new doctrine throughout the Russian empire. In the preparation of the eucharist, warm water is mixed with the wine. Laymen receive the bread sopped in the cup. Rather a strange usage! as it seems to class them with the deceiver Judas, who was the only one of the Apostles to whom Jesus gave the sop.

"—— and when he had dipped the sop, he gave it to Judas

Iscariot; and after the sop, Satan entered into him." St. John, chap. xiii. verses 26, 27.

The clergy take the elements separate.

Predestination is an article of the Greek church: and its writers defend the principle on the prescience of the Divine Nature.

Prayers for the dead are admitted; but not from any idea of purgatory, or dogmatical notions of the state of their souls. Hence it may be considered more as a tribute of tenderness towards the departed friend, and an awful reminder of our own mortality, than any established rite. On similar grounds regard is paid to the relics of holy persons: but, as in the case of images, the original sentiment is too frequently lost in blind superstition. Supererogation, indulgences and dispensations, are utterly disallowed in this church. And as it does not, like the Romish, assume infallibility, we cannot be surprised at the religious toleration dispensed by a sovereign professing its doctrines.

A work, written by Peter Mogilas, will give you a tolerably just idea of the Russian creed on religious and moral practice. You may find it in Greek or Latin: it is entitled "a confession of the catholic and apostolic faith of the Greeks and Russians;" and divided into parts. It mentions that the commands of the church are nine. Attendance on public worship; observance of the four great fasts; venerating consecrated persons; auricular confessions; not to read heretical books; to pray for the supreme powers spiritual and temporal, and for the conversion of unbelievers; to observe the fasts appointed by the fathers; not to embezzle the property of the church, and not to marry during a fast. It inculcates that the seven gifts of the Holy Ghost are wisdom, understanding, counsel, power, knowledge, piety, and awe of God. The three sins against the Holy Ghost are presumption, despair, and heresy. And the seven deadly sins are thus numbered; pride, covetousness, fornication, envy, gluttony, revenge, and sloth. The four sins against which vengeance even on earth is denounced, are murder, sodomy, oppressing the widow and orphan, and depriving the labourer of his hire. The seven charities to the bodies of men, are, feeding

the hungry, giving drink to the thirsty, clothing the naked, relieving prisoners, visiting the sick, receiving strangers, and burying the dead. To these are to be added seven charities to their souls; converting the sinner, teaching the ignorant, giving counsel to those who require it, praying for our neighbours, being patient under injuries, and forgiving our enemies.

Confession is one of the seven sacraments of the Greek church. But so different is its principle from what is understood to be that of the Latin, that I cannot deny myself the pleasure of repeating an observation of Dr. Covel's, and copying a sketch of the *spiritual regulations* which are delivered to the priests on this head.

The ancient Greek church (remarks the good doctor) commanded her penitents to confess their sins in secret to God alone; and bade them consult their priest, only in what was needful to restore in them the *spirit of meekness*. The church of Rome commands confession to be particularly made to a priest, merely to erect a tribunal for him; and to assert by him the mighty power of the church to pardon sins. The end of the Greek is purely the amendment of the penitent; that of the Latin, to magnify the glory of the priest. In the one church the confessors pretend no further than to abate or remit the penance, declaring the pardon comes from God alone. In the other, the priesthood assumes the full power to remit or pardon at pleasure. Thus far Covel. And now judge how just i his encomium on this part of the Greek opinions.

The spiritual regulation declares that "it is the duty of priests at the confession of penitents to deter and subdue the pride of such as they observe to be stubborn and unrelenting, with the threats of the judgments of God; and to comfort and support with the hope of his grace and mercy, the dejected and penitent. They should therefore understand how to instruct a sinner to break off his evil habits; how to visit and solace the sick; how, with the word of exhortation, to animate and convoy a dying person in his passage out of this world; how especially to confirm sinners condemned here, in the hopes of divine mercy hereafter. The priest must not treat with insolence those who come to him for ghostly advice; he is not to show

himself morose towards the penitent, whom he ought to exhort with mildness; nor at any time to ask a present of his spiritual sons; nor is he upon any provocation to reveal their confessions. But if a man discover at confession an intended robbery which he has not yet committed; treason against his sovereign or the government; and while he speaks shows no signs of remorse, but rather a design to fulfil his wickedness, and betray the confessor into connivance with the deed; then the spiritual father must require him in the name of God to desist wholly from his evil purpose; and if by a sullen silence, or an attempt to justify himself, he appear inflexible, the spiritual father must withhold all remission of a sin so persisted in, and lodge an information against him with the officers of justice. In the same manner he must reveal the cheats of any impostor who has invented miracles and lying wonders to delude the people. The confessor has the power to enlarge or lessen the time or degree of spiritual punishment, or to exchange one penance for another, as a fast for an alms; provided, under the pretence of alms, the priest does not want a donation to himself, or to some other person not truly necessitous. He must take care to impose no penalties which are impracticable; but such as the penitents are capable of performing, and such as are proportioned to their abilities and situation; by reflecting what kind of penance may reasonably be inflicted on a soldier upon duty, an indigent traveller on the road, a sailor at sea, a begger, a sick man, and the like. After he has sufficiently restrained the penitents by the denunciations of God, and they declare their contrition, and determination to lead a new life, he may, in the name of the Redeemer of mankind, pronounce their pardon, and admit them to a participation of the holy sacraments." Hence we may infer that sorrow for sin, confession, and absolution, constitute this mystery in the Greek church; in which we see penance does not make a necessary part; the one thing needful, being true repentance. I shall terminate my account of this rite with three specimens of the service, from Dr. King's translation of the Greek liturgies. His observations have been excellent guides to me; and by referring you to his learned work for a com-

plete and nice knowledge of the ritual now under my pen, I propose a pleasure to you, and have one myself in avowing my obligation. The examples I have selected are the exhortation of the priest to the penitent. His prayer to God for pardon, and his absolution through Christ."

EXHORTATION.

Behold my child! Christ is invisibly present to receive thy confession. Be not ashamed, therefore, nor afraid; and conceal nothing from me: but without equivocation tell me whatsoever thou hast done, that thou mayest receive forgiveness from our Lord Jesus Christ. Behold his image before us: I am only a witness to testify before him whatever thou shalt say to me: but if thou concealest any thing from me, thou shalt have double sin. Attend, therefore, since thou art come for medicine, that thou goest not away unhealed. Begin to amend thy life by God's help, and return not to thy former sins; for christians ought to be true and just in all their dealings. To which end, may God grant you his grace!

PRAYER.

O God our Saviour, who by thy prophet Nathan didst declare thy forgiveness to David, when he repented of his sins; and didst receive the repenting prayer of Manasseh; accept with thy wonted compassion this thy servant, who repenteth him of his sins; and overlook whatsoever he hath committed, O thou whose property it is to forgive iniquities, and to pass over transgressions! For thou Lord hast said, I have no pleasure in the death of a sinner, but rather that he should be converted and live! And thou dost forgive offences even until seventy times seven. Thy mercy is infinite, as thy goodness is incomprehensible. If thou shouldest be extreme to mark what is done amiss, who could abide it? For thou art the God of penitents; and to thee we offer up our praise, to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Ghost, now and for ever, even unto all eternity.

ABSOLUTION.

May Jesus Christ our Lord God, through his grace, bounty, and love to mankind, forgive thee, my child, all thy sins! Amen.

At the end of the absolution, the priest signs him with the cross, and the penitent kissing the holy gospels and the crucifix, departs.

Having brought you to confession, I will now leave you to reflect on so solemn a rite; promising that when you next see my hand it shall be to lead you to the altar; not to your own espousals, but to be a witness of the awful ceremony used in Russia to tie the gordian knot of weal or wo. Meanwhile, farewel.

LETTER IX.

St. Petersburgh, September, 1805.

THE matrimonial service in the Greek church need only be seen, to establish in your mind the conviction of its antiquity. At every step you recognise a few of the Jewish rites, mingled with many ceremonies which the ancient Romans borrowed from Greece. The hymeneal torch, chaplets of roses, the sacred cup and veil, all are here. How long the service has borne its present form in Russia, deeper antiquarians than I must determine; but certainly these are evident traces of its pagan origin. Nor was it unnatural, nor indeed blamable, in the early proselytes to christianity, though they ceased to invoke Venus, Hymen, and Juno, at their nuptials, yet to retain the innocent emblems of the pure flame of connubial love; and of those joys, blooming like flowers; and which would leave a sweet remembrance, like the still balmy fragrance of their fading garlands.

The ceremonies of the Greek marriage are three. They were formerly celebrated as distinct offices, at certain intervals of time; but now they are usually passed through at once.

The first office is called that of *the espousals* or *betrothing*. The parties pledge themselves to be true to each other by the interchange of rings. Anciently the man received a gold one, and the woman a silver; but now both rings are gold. The priest before whom the vows are made presents lighted tapers to the contracting pair; which answer to the nuptial torch of the heathens, and must mean the same. The ceremony takes place in the church, and usually in the evening. The liturgy being said, the priest standing within the nave (or as the Russians call it, the *trapeza*), places the parties who come to be betrothed before the door which leads into the sanctuary (or, as we denominate it, the choir). Two rings are laid on the holy table. The priest makes the sign of the cross three times upon the heads of the couple, and then touching their foreheads with the lighted tapers, presents one to each. The benediction immediately follows, and a few short prayers, ending with—

"O Lord our God, who from among the gentiles didst espouse thy church as a chaste virgin, bless these espousals, and join and preserve these thy servants in peace and concord."

The priest then takes the rings, and gives one to the man and the other to the woman, saying,

"The servant of God is betrothed to the handmaid of God, in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost, now and for ever; even unto ages of ages."

Repeating this to each of them thrice, he signs them on the forehead with the rings, and puts them on the fore-finger of the right hand of each. The espoused couple then exchange their rings; and the priest dismisses them with a long and beautiful prayer, wherein he remarks on the holy betrothment of Rebecca to Isaac, when the servant of Abraham, after travelling into a far country to seek a bride for his master's son, met with her, and as a pledge of her future nuptials put upon her hand a gold ring.

The second rite, which is properly the marriage, is called the *matrimonial coronation*, from the circumstance of crowning the bride and bridegroom. This is done to denote their triumph over all irregular desires; and from an idea that all is not quite so regular with those who enter into a second marriage, it is

usually omitted at such nuptials. A third marriage is deemed very scandalous; and a fourth, absolutely unlawful. Formerly the crowns were chaplets of flowers, but now they are generally of gold or silver, and often very elegantly embellished.

The parties having been betrothed, enter the sanctuary with lighted tapers in their hands; the priest preceding with the censer, and singing, along with the choristers, the nuptial psalm, beginning with, "Blessed are all they that fear the Lord."

He then addresses the bridegroom.

"Hast thou a good and unrestrained will and firm intention to take unto thee to wife this woman whom thou seest before thee?"

The man replies in the affirmative; and the same question is asked of the bride. On a similar response, the priest inquires whether they have before pledged their faith to any others; being answered in the negative, he gives them the holy benediction; and proceeds with many fine prayers for their future happiness in each other, and virtuous lives. At the end of the third invocation the priest takes the crowns and places one on the bridegroom's head, saying,

"The servant of God is crowned for the handmaid of God, in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost."

The other he puts on the bride's head with the same words; and repeats the benediction three times, saying,

"O Lord our God crown them with glory and honour. Thou hast put crowns of precious stones upon their heads! They asked of thee life, and thou gavest it to them; and thou wilt give them the blessing of eternal life: thou wilt make them glad with the joy of thy countenance."

Then is read Saint Paul's famous epistle on the duties of marriage. Several more prayers are said, and portions of scripture. The cup is brought, and blessed by the priest, who gives it thrice; first to the man and then to the woman. After which he takes them by the hand, attended by the paranymphi (the bridemen and maids), in a procession round a circular spot

three times, turning from west to east. Then taking off the bridegroom's crown, he says,

"Be thou magnified, O bridegroom! as Abraham. Be thou blessed as Isaac, and multiplied as Jacob; walking in peace, and performing the commandments of God in righteousness!"

And taking off the bride's, he addresses her in a similar manner.

"Be thou magnified, O bride! as Sarah. Be thou joyful as Rebecca, and multiplied as Rachel; delighting in thine own husband, and observing the bounds of the law according to the good pleasure of God!"

He concludes with the following prayer.

"O God, our God, who was present in Cana of Galilee, and didst give thy blessing to the marriage there, bless these thy servants, who by thy providence are joined in the fellowship of matrimony; bless their going out and their coming in; replenish their life with good things; receive their crowns in thy kingdom; preserve them undefiled, blameless, and free from snares, for ever and ever."

The company then congratulate the parties, who salute each other; and the priest gives the holy dismission, which finishes the ceremony.

The third rite is that of *dissolving the crowns*. It takes place on the eighth day. The service is very short, containing little more than the following prayer.

"O Lord our God, who hast blessed the crown of the year, and hast appointed these crowns to be put on the heads of those who are joined together in the bonds of matrimony, thereby rewarding their continence, inasmuch as they are joined in the purity of wedlock according to thy institution; give thy blessing to this new married couple at the dissolving of their crowns, and preserve their union undivided: that they may always give thanks unto thy name, of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost, now and for ever, unto ages of ages."

After this, the bride may be conducted to the bridegroom's house; they being now made one in heart, soul, and body—at least, such is the "consummation devoutly to be wished!"

On the perusal of the whole of this service, I prefer its prin-

ciple before that used in the English church on the same occasion. Here, we do not meet with vows of an everlasting love; a vow which is in no person's own power to keep. We may safely swear to esteem worth; worth as naturally producing esteem, as the blossom the fruit. But love is a strange mystery; we can explain it only in part; and we all know that none of us can command it to live or die at our pleasure. Hence, vows of truth and fidelity are all for which we can pledge ourselves; and those are always in our power to keep, as every man may command his own moral actions. The Greek ritual goes no further; all which we swear to do, in the church of England, being prayed for in that of Russia, to enable us to do. And besides, were the English marriage vows to be adhered to in all things, the redress, which the law holds forth to an injured wife or husband, would be impossible. Do not both parties swear before God, "to have taken each other to have and to hold from that day forward, for *better* for *worse*, for richer for poorer, in sickness and in health *to love* and to cherish till death do them part?" Surely then, however *worse* either party may become, all pleas of separation are stopped at the source. No ill usage, no ill conduct, after such an engagement, can render lawful the putting away of the wife or husband. All these unreasonable pledges are avoided in the Greek ritual, and hence it interferes not with either the law of nature, or the law of the land.

Having dismissed a ceremony which leads to the *house of gladness*, I shall now change my subject and conduct you towards that of *mourning*. The wise man saith, "Blessed are they that enter therein, for the virtues are watered with tears!" I believe it is true. Afflictions make them strike root; and succeeding joys, like sun beams, draw them up to luxuriance and usefulness. On the strength of this opinion I shall bring you to witness *the office of the holy oil.*

It is administered to the sick from the authority of this passage in St. James.

"Is any sick among you, let him call for the elders of the church; and let them pray over him, anointing him with oil in the name of the Lord: and the prayer of faith shall save the

sick, and the Lord shall raise him up; and if he have committed sins, they shall be forgiven him."

Seven or three priests are sufficient to officiate at this ceremony, which is so far different from the Romish extreme unction, that it may be bestowed on any degree of illness; and is not held back as the last passport to the other world. This is meant to heal the sufferer, not to embalm him. I shall describe it as performed by seven priests, either in the church, or at the invalid's house.

A table being placed, a dish of wheat is set upon it, and upon the wheat an empty lamp is deposited to receive the holy oil, which is usually taken from the consecrated lamps before the image of Jesus; and having been there, it is considered as doubly hallowed. Seven small twigs (the number of the priests who are to use them), are bound together with a piece of cotton, and stuck in the wheat. The holy gospel is laid upon it; and a taper is given to each priest. Seven of them stand round the table. The first takes the censer, and incenses the table in every part; and also all the persons who are present. Then standing at the table, and looking towards the east, he blesses God and petitions for his mercy. Many prayers follow, addressed to the Father, the Son, and the Virgin, in which a blessing is invoked to accompany the application of the oil, and to heal the patient from his infirmities and from sins. The first priest then takes one of the twigs, and dipping it in the holy oil, annoints the sick person crossways on the forehead, the nostrils, the breast, the mouth, the chest, and both sides of the hands; saying a long prayer addressed to the Divine Persons as almighty; and to the Saints as mediators. The second priest takes another twig and repeats the ceremony with other prayers; then in like manner, and with like invocations, follow the other priests until the seventh has finished. At this conclusion, the sick man, if he be able, stands or sits in the midst of the priests; but in case of his being too weak, they stand around his bed, and the first priest opening the gospel, with the letters downwards, places it upon the invalid's head. He then utters a prayer over it; and raising it again, presents it to the man to

kiss. More invocations are added by all the priests, and the benediction is given in these words:

"Christ our true God, through the prayers of his most honourable mother, of his honourable and life-giving cross, of the holy glorious apostle James, first bishop of Jerusalem, and brother of all saints, heal, pardon, and bless thee!"

The sick person bows his head and repeats, "Bless me a sinner!" after which the benediction is repeated; the priests depart, and he lays him down in peace.

It is remarkable that the ceremonies used at burying the dead are nearly the same with all people. Heathen, Jew, and Christian have similar rites, as if one voice dictated to all the religious observances due to the remains of our kindred mortals. On a man breathing his last in Russia, the first office is to close his eyes and mouth; the next is washing the body with water; and then the priest is sent for to perfume the deceased with incense. It is performed with prayers and hymns. But persons of rank are solicitous to carry this pious rite yet further; and when the body is placed in the coffin, a succession of priests attend it day and night, with tapers burning, chanting hymns, and reading portions of the holy scriptures. When the time of watching is expired, and all things are ready for the interment, the relations are then called together who are to appear as mourners, and bear up the pall. But before the coffin is closed, the ceremony of *the kiss* must be performed, which is the last act of respect to the body. The priests first, and then the relations and friends take their farewel of the deceased, either by kissing himself or the coffin. The order of the burial service is as follows.

After the priest has poured forth his incense from the holy censer upon the corpse and the persons present, he then gives the benediction, and the choristers chant the response:

"O our Saviour, let the soul of thy servant rest with the spirits of just men made perfect; and grant him that blessed life which is with thee, O thou lover of mankind! O Lord, let the soul of thy servant find peace in thy peace, where all thy saints repose. Thou art God, didst descend into Hades, and

delivered those that were bound. Do thou, Lord, give rest to the soul of thy servant!"

The coffin is then carried into the church, the priest going before with a lighted taper, and the deacon with the censer. The procession stopping, and the body being set down in the sanctuary, the ninety-first psalm is sung in the most solemn tones. After this follow other anthems with prayers, some of which, from their beauty and exquisite pathos, I shall transcribe. The first was composed by John Damascene, usually called John the Monk.

"What pleasure of life is unmixed with sorrow? What glory upon earth is of long continuance? All are more fleeting than a shadow, all more deceitful than a dream! In one moment death snatcheth all away. But, O Jesus, in the light of thy countenance, in the beauty of thy holiness, give peace to him whom thou hast chosen, for thou art the lover of mankind.

"Behold the struggles of the departing spirit when separating from the body! How does she lament, and there is none to have mercy upon her! Does she turn her eyes to angels? She supplicates in vain. Does she stretch her hands to men? There is none to help. Let us then consider the shortness of life; and from Christ alone seek peace for our departed brother, and mercy for our own souls.

"All things are vain which cannot survive the grave. Will riches survive, or will glory attend us beyond the tomb? Death approacheth, and all these vanish away. Therefore, let us cry unto Jesus the immortal king, to give repose to him who is departed, and to place him in the habitation of the joyful.

"Where are the affections of the world? Where the vain dream of earthly delights? Where gold and silver? Where the multitude and din of attendants? Look on this coffin, behold this narrow grave! all here is dust, all ashes: the vanities of life are a shadow, and have passed away. Come then, let us implore the immortal King. O Lord, vouchsafe thy blessings to thy departed servant, and grant him repose in thine everlasting kingdom.

"Thy word, O Lord, created me. Thou didst endow me with a visible and an invisible nature. Thou didst form my

body of the clay, and inspired my soul by thy divine and quickening spirit. Therefore, O Christ! give life to thy servant in thy rest for ever.

"I weep and lament when I consider death and those who are laid low in the grave; when I behold that body which was created after the image of God, deformed and inglorious! But our Redeemer liveth; and through his might, what is sown in corruption shall rise up incorruptible. Truly then we may say, blessed is the Lord who maketh us partakers of his kingdom."

After several short prayers for the pardon and beatitude of the deceased, the following is chanted, as if addressed by the dead to those around.

"Brethren, friends, kinsmen, and acquaintance; view me here lying breathless, motionless, bereft of all that made me lovely in your eyes! But yesterday, we conversed together, we looked on each other; and now death hath sealed my lips, and closed my lids for ever. Come near all who loved me, and with a last embrace, pronounce the last farewel. No longer shall I sojourn with you, no more will you hear the sounds of my voice. To the Judge I go who is no respecter of persons; the master and the slave; the sovereign and the subject; the rich and the poor; all are alike before him; and according to their deeds and his mercy shall they be put to shame or to honour. Therefore, let me intreat, and beseech you all to pray earnestly unto Christ our God that I may not be tormented with the wicked according to my sins, but be received into the light of life!"

When this appeal is sung with all the pathos of religious melody, I cannot conceive any thing more solemn and affecting. The dead body of one we love, lying before us; his graces and imperfections laid low in the grave: nothing seems alive but our own grief, and his conscious soul trembling before the All-perfect God. We hear him cry for our prayers! Such an adjuration strikes against the heart with a force unutterable. The next invocation is not less impressive. It is delivered by the priest.

"Come, my brethren, let us give our last farewel to our deceased brother, giving thanks to God! He hath now forsaken his kindred and approacheth the grave; no longer mindful of

vanity, or the cares of the world. Where are now his kindred and his friends? Behold they are now divided from him! O what a separation, my brethren! What lamentation accompanies this hour! Approach, embrace him who lately was as one of yourselves! He is now delivered up to the grave; he is covered with a stone; he sojourneth in darkness, and is buried among the dead. He is separated from his kindred and friends. Every sinful connexion with life and vanity is now dissolved. The spirit hath forsaken her mansion: the clay is disfigured, the vessel is broken. We carry a speechless, motionless, senseless body to the grave: let us intreat the Lord to grant him repose!

"What is life? a flower, a vapour, the early dew of the morning! Approach therefore, with attention contemplate the grave. Where is now the graceful form? Where is youth? Where is the brightness of the eye, where the beauty of the complexion? All are withered like grass, all are vanished. Come, and let us with tears fall down before the pitying Jesus!

"Life is a shadow that departeth, a dream of error, the fruitless labour of imagined existence. Let us fly from the corruption of the world, that we may inherit the eternity of heaven! Come hither, O ye descendants of Adam! See, humbled in the dust, a man like ourselves; divested of his comeliness, consumed by worms in the grave; perishing in darkness, and covered with earth! When the awful angels have severed the spirit from the body, then the ties of earth are no longer remembered; then the future judgment alone engages our attention. Let us then supplicate the Judge, and beseech him to forgive the sins of our departed brother!

"Come hither, my brethren, and view the dust and ashes of which we are formed! Whither are we going? What shall we become? Who is poor? or who is rich? who is master, or who is free? All, all are ashes! The bloom of the countenance withereth; and the blossom of youth is cut down by death. How vain and perishing are all the pleasures and dignities of life! for, we must all decay and die. Kings and princes, judges and potentates, the rich and poor, all are human nature, and sink into the dust. See! all the members of the once vigorous body now

motionless in death! The eyes which were once so intelligent, are closed; the feet are bound; the hands, clods of clay; extinct is the sense of hearing; and the tongue locked up in silence! All are delivered up to the grave; all human things are vanity!

" Hearken, O thou mother of the sun that never sets! Thou parent of the blessed Jesus, we beseech thee intercede with thy Divine Son, that he who is departed hence may enjoy repose with the souls of the just made perfect! O, our Saviour Christ, let the soul of thy servant rest in peace in thy kingdom!"

Then the priest, turning towards the body of the deceased, says:

" May thy memory endure for ever, O, our brother, who art worthy to be blessed and to be had in remembrance!"

The choir repeats the same thrice; and after that the priest pronounces the absolution, through " the mediation of Jesus Christ," aloud. The corpse is then laid into the grave, while the funeral anthem to the Trinity is sung over it. When it is lowered into the earth, the priest takes a shovel of dust and casteth it crossways upon the coffin, saying,

" The earth is the Lord's, and the fulness thereof; the round world, and they that dwell therein."

After which he pours oil out of the lamp, and scatters some incense on the lid. The grave is then covered in; and the ceremony ends with a prayer to the Saviour for the rest and eternal happiness of the deceased.

A vulgar opinion has gone abroad, that in the Greek church it is usual to put into the coffin with dead persons a writing called a passport to heaven. This idea is a mere fable. A paper often is placed in the hands of the deceased when they go to the grave; but it is rather a confession of their misdeeds, than any license to carry them into the presence of their offended God. I shall give you the petition or confession; as I conceive its spirit to be as pious as the prayer is finely composed.

" O thou Creator and Preserver of all, God the Father, God the Son, God the Holy Ghost, in three persons, but one godhead, substance, and essence; who art incessantly praised by all creatures; who by thy holy will, foreknowledge, immeasurable goodness, and inexpressible wisdom, didst create me also

thy servant [the name of the deceased] to glorify thee, O Lord my God, to celebrate thy holy name, gratefully to thank thee for thy mercy, and to endeavour by all virtues to attain thine everlasting kingdom. But, O divine Trinity, I have sinned against thee, I have offended thy holiness, I have broken thy commandments during my life, and have not preserved, as I ought, thy image and likeness existing within me. I have defiled my soul and body by all manner of sins; and by wicked actions have moved thee to wrath. But though I have been deceived by the vanities of the world, yet O Lord, have I not cast myself wholly from thee, my creator, my life, my joy, my hope and my salvation. And now my days being limited by thy power, I willingly resign them. My soul separates itself from my corruptible body, which, when it seemeth good unto thee, shall with this body rise again to life immortal; which consummation I hope for, from thy goodness and mercy, according to the faith of our holy religion; and because thou didst suffer for our salvation. I am terrified with fear lest the torments of the wicked should be inflicted upon me for the sins I have committed against thee; wherefore, O immortal King, and my God, I pray unto thee with my latest breath that thou wouldst forgive all my sins from my youth up until now; for thou art my God and my creator. I believe in thee, I hope in thee. By thy righteous judgment save me, O Lord, and vouchsafe unto me thy heavenly kingdom. Thou, O Jesus Christ, didst become man for our sakes; grant that we may be delivered from suffering and sin. By thy grace I was born and educated in the orthodox christian faith, and in the wisdom of the only holy eastern church. I beseech thee, O Lord, judge me according to this christian faith, and not according to my works. By this faith of the holy church, and of all orthodox christians who are gone before, I earnestly beg for mercy, forgiveness, and remission of all my offences. And in this faith I come unto thee, O Lord, without doubt. And at the separation of my soul from my body, I beseech thee to receive my spirit into thine hands; and according to thy mercy admit me into thine everlasting habitation! Amen."

The Russians have no idea of purgatory, yet the natural love

which inclines them to prolong the memory of a deceased friend has made them establish services in commemoration of the dead to be celebrated at the grave, or in the church, on the third, ninth, and fortieth day after his death; also on the anniversary of that event, as long as the mourners live to see it performed. Having brought you to this meditation on the end of our time, I shall bid you a temporary farewel, with as sincere a benediction as ever passed from the lips of priest or bishop. God bless you in weal or wo, in sickness or in health, in life or death! Ever yours, &c. &c.

LETTER X.

St. Petersburgh, September, 1805.

I HAVE undertaken a very intricate matter, that of initiating you into all the mysteries of the Greek church: and, perhaps, I shall execute my enterprise so clumsily as to be easily discovered to be no better a novice than the daring Clodius; and so share the same fate that he did at the rites of the *bona dea*, be hooted forth for my impertinence. And yet, my good friend, if that should be your decree, I shall take it as rather ungrateful: in asking me to penetrate these mysteries, you send me into the temple; and if I am debarred from inspecting the Holy of Holies, or deemed sacrilegious for having touched the ark at all, you must not unite in the cry against such presumption, by blaming me for not carrying the whole of the fabric by storm.

Much time is required, much reading, and many conversations with the intelligent ministers of the Greek church, to gain any correct idea of its institutions. The books which relate to its services in Russia are numerous, and all in the Sclavonian language. That tongue being almost obsolete, very little of the service is understood by the congregation; but believing that all is orthodox which the priest utters, they repeat at the end of every prayer the usual response, "Lord have mercy upon us!" and cross themselves with the most unreserved faith.

The ceremony of crossing is done by touching the forehead first, then the breast, then the right shoulder, then the left, and so making the sign of the cross. In this action, the thumb with the fore and middle fingers must be bent together, to represent the sacred number of three. This is called the reverence. The great reverence is to prostrate themselves so low as to beat their foreheads on the ground.

Both in monasteries and in parish churches, service is performed thrice a day, under the names of vespers, matins, and the liturgy. The service of each particular day begins in the evening of the preceding one. This usage is founded on that passage in Genesis; "And the evening and the morning were the first day." The greatest part of the duty consists in psalms and hymns; they are not all of them sung, but generally delivered in rather a monotonous recitative. No musical instruments are admitted into the Greek church. The early christians altogether disallowed them, as partaking of judaism; and the Greeks continued the prohibition. It is said that Marinus Sanutus, about the year 1290, was the first who introduced organs into the Latin church; and so fond am I of their "pealing notes," that I think the Romans much obliged to him. We have adopted the practice in our protestant church with happy effect. Indeed, though I esteem the devotion of the heart as the only true devotion, yet I would not have it bestowed alone. There is something niggardly to the Giver of all good, in worshipping him with as bare a homage as possible. As he gave us all the powers we possess, I would have their first fruits dedicated to his honour. With my will, all the arts should mingle their labours to decorate his temples: and that such devotion of them is not despised by the Most High, may be gathered from the plan given to Moses for building the tabernacle.

But to return to the Greek ritual. I shall begin in order, with the vespers, and give you a sketch of the service. You will perceive, by the frequent mention of the change of place of the officiating ministers, that the ceremony must have rather a theatrical air. As most days in the year are dedicated to some saint; so in every day's service there is some reference made

to the holy personage whose name marks it in the calendar. The vespers begin before sun set. The priests standing before the royal doors, which are those that lead into the sanctum sanctorum, gives the benediction; then several short prayers are repeated, which are immediately followed by seven longer ones, called the lucerns. The priest comes forth from a door on the north side of the sanctum sanctorum, and offers up petitions for the people and the state. Psalms or hymns are then sung; and an invocation addressed to the saint of the day. A hymn to the Virgin succeeds, and a prayer to her Divine Son for his grace: at that moment the royal doors are thrown open, and the deacon, holding the censer, comes forth, followed by the priest, and the clerks bearing lighted tapers. The priest gives the benediction; after which the deacon incenses the holy table and exclaims, "Wisdom stand up!" The priest and deacon then return into the altar (or sanctum sanctorum), the doors are closed on them, and an anthem is sung. The words are so beautiful that I cannot but repeat them.

"O Jesus, thou most gentle light of the sacred glory of the Immortal Father! we being now come to the setting of the sun, and seeing the evening light that fades to relume again, sing the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost, God. Thou art worthy at all times to be praised by the voices of the pious, O Son of God; therefore the world glorifieth thee!"

In the meantime, while this and other hymns are sung, the priest reappears, and standing before the congregation with his hands crossed upon his breast, makes his devout reverences and retires. The deacon then comes forth from the north door, and repeats several prayers for the sovereign and the church. The choristers sing the song of Simeon. And after more invocations to Jesus and the Virgin, the priest pronounces the following:

"O Lord, grant us, now retiring to sleep, respose both of body and soul; and protect us from sinful dreams, and the sensuality of the night and darkness. Assuage our unruly affections; quench the fiery darts of the wicked, which are treacherously thrown against us; repress the seditions of our flesh; and lay our earthly and worldly thoughts asleep. Give us,

O Lord, quickness of understanding, purity of thought, sobriety of heart, and temperate sleep, free from all the illusions of Satan; that we may arise at the hour of prayer confirmed in thy commandments, and have the remembrance of thy judgments strongly infixed in us: and grant that glorifying thee in the night, we may bless thee for ever more!" With the benediction ends this service of the vespers.

The matins, which are celebrated at break of day, are on the same plan with the vespers, only praying for that almighty guidance through the day, which has so mercifully preserved them during the night. I shall not therefore detain you with any particular description of this duty, but proceed to notice the liturgies, or communion services, of this church.

In Russia there are three liturgies, which are used occasionally; *Saint Chrysostom's*, which is in ordinary use; *Saint Basil's*, for particular days; and that of the *presanctified*, performed in the great fast before Easter. St. Basil's is the most ancient, it being composed by him when he was bishop of Cæsarea, and considered as the first liturgy that ever was committed to writing. It was adopted by the church of Constantinople before Saint Chrysostom wrote his for that diocese. As the church of Russia took her ritual from that of Constantinople, like it, she uses both communion services on different days. St. Gregory is supposed to be the author of the *presanctified* office; so named because it is celebrated on the Wednesdays, or Fridays in Lent, with those elements which have been consecrated on the preceding Sunday.

The communicants in the Greek church receive the holy bread standing; and every person is obliged, by a civil decree, to take it at least once a year; which is usually done in the fast before Easter, neglecting it ever afterwards till that stated time comes round again. However, though they do not communicate, they are very eager to attend the liturgy, or *hearing mass* as it is called, which is performed every day. The offertory is a service that precedes the liturgy; intended as the preparation of the elements, and the opportunity for the congregation to lay they offerings on the altar of the Lord. Its directions are as follow:

The priest who is to officiate must be at peace with the world, and guard his heart against the admission of any impure thought. He enters the church, and being joined by the deacon, they make three reverences eastward before the holy doors. They pay the same homages to the image of Jesus, kissing it with great solemnity; and also to that of the Virgin Mary. After this they bow to the two chorusses which stand on each side, and then proceed to the altar. During these transactions many appropriate prayers are said. Being come within the sanctum sanctorum they bow thrice before the holy table, kiss it, and the gospel which is laid upon it, and again bowing repeat each a prayer in a low voice. The priest then puts on several additional vestments, and approaching the *prothesis* (a second altar) places the sacred vessels in order, setting the dish on the right hand, and the chalice on the left. He takes the bread in his left hand, and the holy spear in his right, and with the spear signs the bread with the cross. He then thrusts the spear into the bread, praying over it the whole time. The deacon pours mingled wine and water into the chalice. The bread is cut into portions, and arranged in a very curious manner upon the dish; every piece having a particular invocation said over it. This done, the deacon puts incense on it, and the priest covers it with the holy veil. The like respect is paid to the wine; and then the deacon, making his reverence, withdraws through the north door, the royal doors being kept close till the celebration of the mass.

When the liturgy is to be performed, the deacon enters from the royal doors, with the priest; and with him goes through a great many holy bowings to the altar, the image of Jesus, and the Saints. Many prayers are also repeated and hymns sung, till they come to the administering of the eucharist.

The priest taking up the sacred dish that contains the bread, sets it upon the deacon's head, in the manner of the Athenian virgins, who at the festivals of Minerva used so to carry the baskets of offerings to the altars of the goddess. As I remarked before, besides this you may observe many customs which the christian Greek church has borrowed from the pagan. The deacon thus charged, goes forward holding the

censer, and the priest bearing the chalice, preceded by tapers, march in solemn pomp round the church. Short prayers are repeated during this procession till the priest and deacon re-entering the holy doors, stand there uttering further invocations. They then incense the dish and the cup; and kissing them, with a fan drive away any flies which may approach. They prostrate themselves before the holy elements; a second time incense the table, repeating prayers for the living, and thanksgiving for the dead in Christ. The priest and deacon then take the holy bread and wine, eating and drinking it with great devotion. The congregation draw near, one after the other, bowing and holding their hands crossed over their breasts; and the priest presents to each the piece of bread sopped in the wine. This done many more prayers are said and minor ceremonies performed; the whole ending with the deacon eating up all the holy bread that might have been left; pouring the wine into a smaller cup, drinking it likewise to the last drop, that not a particle of the elements may be lost.

There are five orders in the Greek priesthood. Bishops, priests, deacons, subdeacons, and readers which include singers. The episcopal order has other distinctions, metropolitan, archbishop, and bishop. The two first titles are not attached to any particular see, but depend entirely upon the will of the emperor; they are merely rank, with a very little addition of power, as every bishop is independent in his own diocese. The clergy are divided into regular and secular. The former are of the monastic order, the latter are of the parochial ministers. The secular clergy are called *papas* (fathers), and their highest dignity is that of proto-papa; that is the first priest in a great church where there are several of the same order. They are allowed to marry once, but never a second time, under pain of being compelled to quit their holy profession.

Of the rise and progress of monkism, from its birth in the east to its maturity in the Greek church, Mosheim and the learned chaplain to the factory at St. Petersburgh give so satisfactory an account, that I need only speak their language to impress you with a pretty correct idea of how this unnatural superstition made its march round the world. The doctrine that

the highest virtue, and the perfection of human nature, consist in leading a life of solitude and contemplation, is not less absurd than the fancy that celibacy is the best proof of devotion to God. "Increase and multiply!" was a primary command of the Deity; and how the reverse can be one of his allwise mandates too, requires a more experienced casuist than I pretend to be, to explain.

Paul the Hermit, whose life is written by St. Jerome, and who lived in the third century, is considered to be the first founder of monastic orders. To avoid the persecution by Decius, he fled into the lonely deserts of Thebais; where, it is said, he dwelt ninety years, even till he died, subjecting himself to all the desolations of perfect solitude. It is, however, to be observed, that though this modern Saint Paul is placed at the head of the order of hermits, yet that gloomy manner of life was very common in the east from the earliest periods. The sultry atmosphere which envelopes that part of the globe, by disposing the inhabitants to indolence, is a natural cause of that love of retirement and repose, which drove them into spots sequestered from business and from man. Not having energy to be actively good, they esteemed it sufficiently virtuous to be able to withdraw from all temptations to wickedness; from all incitements to lose themselves in the interests of their fellow creatures. *To be, or not to be*, seemed *the question* with them: and not to be with their brethren on earth was the same to them as being with the angels in heaven. Hence it is not wonderful that a people thus inclined should readily embrace the mystic theology which arose at this period. It came from the Platonic school, and that favourite doctrine of its disciples, that "the divine nature is diffused through all human souls." They maintained that silence, tranquillity and bodily mortification, were the only means by which the faculty of reason, the emanation of the Deity in man, could exert its latent principle of virtue and divine wisdom. Forgetting they were men, they aspired to be angels at once; and for this purpose, that they might neither love nor hate, tempt nor be tempted, they retired into caves and wildernesses; and there, lost in meditation, submitted themselves to all the privations

of hunger and thirst. By taking particular passages in scripture detached from the context, they found some arguments to support their cause, and thus defended solitude and celibacy with as hearty a zeal as the apostles did the truly reasonable doctrines of love to God and duty towards our neighbour. Egypt, Palestine, and Syria, were filled by lonely monks and sequestered virgins; and the enthusiastic St. Basil brought the same solitary passion into the once social land of Greece. From him most of the monks of Russia name themselves; and for the most part follow his rules.

The principal of a monastery is called either the Archimandrite or the Hegumen; the one is equivalent to abbot or father, the other to prior. The nunneries are upon the same establishment; the principal being called Hegumena; and the other ordinances are on a similar foundation. The only essential difference is, that men may profess themselves monks at thirty years of age; women may not become nuns till they are fifty. You will agree with me in approving the latter rule. If a woman be not married before she have arrived at those very mature years, she may well plead that nature has taken the vows for her; and so without wrong or robbery to the future generation may take on her the veil that is to exclude her from this for ever. A convent is then a peaceful asylum. Childless, unmated, cheerless is the existence of most aged females who are in that situation. Few but mercenaries attend the old age of her who is what the world calls an *old maid:* and cold is that service which is only purchased. In my mind the refuge of a monastery for these "unappropriated sweets" of creation, is a most desirable establishment; and therefore I applaud that of Russia with my whole heart. But to shut up within the eternal bonds of vows and impassable walls, the young, the fair, and the tender, is sacrilege against the first laws of heaven. It takes from man the mate that was made for him; it deprives the world of many thousand human beings, who might have sprung from bosoms now condemned to the barren pillow of a monastic cell.

These devotees are distinguished into three degrees; the probationers (or novices), the proficients, and the perfect.

The dress of a probationer is a black cassoc called rhæsa; and a hood, also black, called kamelauch, from being made of camel's hair. Proficients wear an upper cloak called the mandyas or lesser habit, to distinguish it from the great habit, or *angelic image*, as it is called. Monastics of this third and *perfect* degree always wear the hood or veil down; and never, after they have assumed it, suffer their faces to be seen. The same usages hold, both with the men and women in the Russian monasteries. I send you drawings of the monks and nuns in the habits of their favourite saint, Basil; and leaving you to contemplate them, shall quit the sacred pall with this oft repeated vow, how truly I am your faithful friend!

LETTER XI.

St. Petersburgh, October, 1805.

HOW changed is the face of nature since last I addressed you! all is frozen; and covered with the chilling snows of winter. If the city astonished me when under the glowing tints of an autumnal atmosphere, how much more striking does its present pale silvery light make it appear!

Now *indeed this is Russia!* every sensation, every perception, confirms the conviction. The natives have suddenly changed their woollen kaftans, for the greasy and unseemly skins of sheep. The freezing power which has turned every inanimate object into ice, seems to have thawed their hearts and their faculties: they sing, they laugh, they wrestle; tumbling about like great bears amongst the furrows of the surrounding snow. In fact, this season, so prolonged with them, seems more congenial with their natures than their short but vivid summer.

This year the bosom of the Neva was encrusted with ice at an unusually early period: it took place on the 14th of the present month: but in the September of 1715 it was shut up by a frost so intense as to become in a few hours safe for carriages

of the heaviest burthen. Soon after the commencement of the present winter the bridge of boats (which communicates with that part of the city built on an island called Vassilly Ostroff), was allowed to swing to the opposite side of the river, in order to permit vast sheets of congealed water to pass forward into the gulf. After an early frost followed by a temporary thaw, these masses find their way down the Neva; they come from the interior, the lake Ladoga, &c. and proceed with frightful velocity. Sometimes a quick frost arrests these accumulations, and renders them in one night safe for conveyances of every description. Frequently the ice thus collected does not finally dissolve till the expiration of the ensuing May. In that charming month, I am told, summer reappears with the suddenness of enchantment; and every thing around seems rather like the instantaneous mechanism of an English pantomine, than the regular action of the season.

Far different is the scene at present! Where are now the expanded waters of the Neva? The gay gondolas and painted yachts? The myriads of vessels and boats continually passing and repassing? All have disappeared: one bleak extended snowy plain generalizes the views: and scarcely a trace is left to convey an idea that a river ever glided through the heart of this imperial city. The roofs of the palaces, public buildings, and private houses, are shrouded in the same pale garb. But no objects are so strangely beautiful as the trees which grow in several divisions of this metropolis; when divested of their leaves, the repeated coats of snow thickening on their branches, form them into the appearance of white coral encrusted with a brilliant diamond dust. Even the beards of men and horses are white and glittering with this *northern ornament.*

Cold to the Russians, seems to be what heat is to the torpid animal; for Petersburgh at this moment presents a prospect of much greater bustle and activity than during the warmer months. The additional multitudes, spread in busy swarms throughout every quarter, are inconceivable: sledges, carriages, and other *traineau* vehicles, cross and pass each other with incredible velocity. The sensation excited in the eye by the swift, transitory movement of so many objects upon the unbroken

glare of the snow, is painful and blinding: and you might as well determine to fix your sight upon a particular ant (at the demolition of its little world), as on one of these figures when beholding them from a height. From the fortress tower for instance; where I have just been beholding a scene as extraordinary to an English eye, as it is undescribable and amusing.

You will naturally expect a description of the sledge, a prominent feature in a Russian view. It is a machine on which not only the persons of the people are transported from place to place with unparalleled speed, but likewise the product of other nations is passed many thousand versts into the interior. The sledge is precisely a pair of colossal skates joined together. On these (according to the taste of the owner) is erected the most agreeable and convenient carriage which either his purse may afford or his situation claim. The sledges of the humbler order are solely formed of logs of wood bound together with ropes into the beforementioned shape: on this is an even surface of plank or matting, for the accommodation of themselves or loads. You will see a Russian pair in one of these conveyances, amongst my pencil memorandums. The sledges which succeed the drojcka (the St. Petersburgh hackney coach), are generally very neat, yet always gaudy, being decorated with red, green, gold and silver, with strange carved work and uncouth whirligigs of iron. Their interior is well bespread with *damp* hay, for the benefit of the hirer, in order to keep his feet *warm*. It is so difficult to describe the precise *cut* of these vehicles, that I must again refer you to the more accurate delineation in my sketch book.

The sledge carriage of a prince, or a nobleman, is uncommonly handsome. All its appointments are magnificent; and never out of harmony. In it we behold the genuine uncontaminated taste of the country: no bad imitations of German or English coach work are here attempted; all is characteristic; and a picturesque effect, peculiarly its own, is produced by the vehicle itself, its furs, its horses, their trappings and the streaming beards of the charioteers. The nobleman's sledge is built exactly on the same principle with those of inferior people; only differing in the width of the body, which is made to hold two

persons. It is warmly lined with rich furs; and to prevent the lower extremities of the occupier from being cold, has an apron (like those of our curricles) formed of green or crimson velvet, bordered with gold lace. On a step behind, stand the servants with appropriate holders. This place is often filled by gentlemen when accompanying ladies on a sledging party.

The horses attached to this conveyance are the pride of the opulent. Their beauty and value are more considered than the sledge itself. The excess of vanity amongst the young officers and nobility here, consists in driving about two animals whose exquisite elegance of form, and playfulness of action, attract the attention of every passenger. The form of these horses is slight and Arabic, possessing the grace of an Italian greyhound with a peculiar lightness and looseness of pace. One only, is placed in the shafts which never alters its pace from a rapid trot: the other is widely traced by its side; and is taught to pace, curvet, and prance, in the most perfect taste of a finished manège. Their tails and manes are always of an enormous length; a beauty so admired by the Russians that twenty horses out of thirty have false ones. Indeed this custom is so prevalent, that frequently the most rascally Rosinante and pigmy Fin-galloway have long artificial appendages, richly clothed with knots of dirt, hanging as low as the ground.

But to return to the sledge horses. The harness of these creatures is curiously picturesque, being studded with polished brass or silver, hundreds of tassels, intermixed with embossed leather and scarlet cloth. These strange ornaments give the trappings an air of eastern *barbaric* splendor, perfectly consonant with the animal's shape. However, as every carriage in Russia (even should it be built in the excesses of the British mode), is drawn by horses thus romantically caparisoned, the union is sometimes monstrous: and I have often felt the contradiction so forcibly, as to remind me of an absurd sight I once saw at home. It was an Indian chief in a London assembly. He was decorated with chains, shells, and tiger's teeth, while all the spruce, powdered *beaux* around him were in the extreme of European *costume*.

The passion of the Russians for rapid motion, has produced the sport called a sledge race. A regular course for that purpose is kept always smooth, and railed off upon the Neva. Crowds assemble there to witness the wonderful velocity with which this race is performed. The species of horse used on this occasion is an animal whose swiftest pace is a peculiar sort of trot. No race is ever run quicker. Indeed the rapidity of this is incredible, being not at all inferior to that of a gallop. The sledge horses never step out in the usual way, but are taught to lift up both legs on the same side, which gives their motion a singular appearance. By this habit the action of the horse's body is doubled, and their speed consequently increased twofold. I do not yet know whether regular matches are made; or whether the spirit of sport produces bets, &c. I did not perceive any symptoms of this species of gambling, nor did I investigate that *important* question; contenting myself with surveying the *tout ensemble* merely as a picture of rude magnificence.

The surrounding winter scenery; the picturesque sledges and their fine horses; the scattered groups of the observing multitude; the superb dresses of the nobility, their fur cloaks, caps, and equipages, adorned with coloured velvets and gold; with ten thousand other touches of exquisite nature, finished the scene, and made it seem like an Olympic game from the glowing pencil of Rembrandt.

I will now give you an idea of the constituent parts of the animated objects of this scene. I mean the figures and habits of the personages present. The nobility of both sexes, when not enveloped in pelisses, appear in our fashions, only a little more *à la Française*. But it is in the dress of the peasant, the simple covering with which the unsophisticated native of the snows of Russia shields himself from the cold, that we find the characteristic garb of these northern regions. The head is protected from the inclemency of the weather by caps of velvet and fur, some round, others square in the Hulan form, or varied according to the choice of the wearer. A long kaftan of blue or brown cloth reaching below the knees, fitting close to the shape without any cape, and crossing diagonally the breast

(being fastened with cylindrical buttons of brass or white metal till it reaches the bottom of the waist), is the body's covering. Round the waist is a sash of crimson worsted net, like those worn by British officers. In this they place their gloves, or if they be labourers, their hatchets. Their necks are completely bare of any other shelter than their hair which hangs down in straight locks all around it. Their shirts and trowsers are of coarse linen striped with either red or blue. Thick swathes of rags are rolled about their legs to keep out the cold, over which they pull a pair of large and ill constructed boots. Those who do not arrive at the luxury of these leathern defences, increase the swathings to such a bulk by wrappings and cross bandages, that their lower extremities appear more like flour sacks than the legs of men. When thus bulwarked, they stuff them into a pair of enormous shoes, made very ingeniously from the bark of the linden tree, at the expense of three halfpence. Their mode of habiliment undergoes no other alteration during the winter, than perhaps exchanging the kaftan for a sheepskin of the same form. This style of dress appertains to the commonalty alone, and it is curious to observe how closely it resembles that worn by the English in the reign of Richard the Second. I draw my ideas on this subject from our monumental remains of that period, when it was usual to commemorate the form of the deceased in the very habit he wore when alive. Any one who has considered the old tombs in our cathedrals, or has studied the costume to be seen in many illuminated manuscripts extant, will not doubt of the fact, but immediately perceive that the peasantry of Russia in the nineteenth century, are contemporaries in fashion with those of England in the fourteenth.

You will necessarily expect that my gallantry cannot overlook the personal decorations of the fair ladies of the same degree of rank: but alas! this race of the lovely sex are such contradictions to their usual appellation, that I fear you will think me a very uncivil commentator. However, judge for yourself. They are generally stunted, clumsy, round faced, small featured, and sallow complexioned. The latter defect they strive to remedy by a profusion of paint of various hues, which they

daub on with as little taste as art. The wives of the lowest classes wear a short gown of blue woollen cloth, bound with divers colours, most glaringly imitating the rainbow interlinings on their faces. The waist is usually fastened by a close row of cylindrical buttons. Their heads are ordinarily bound with a flowered handkerchief of the gayest pattern, terminating beneath the chin. On holidays, a little front of gold and coloured stones is added, formed like the diadem of Juno. In the most excessive cold this slight coëffure is the only covering for the head; but for the shelter of the body, the ever-valuable and customary sheepskin is applied to, in the shape of an English peasant's bedgown. Warm stockings and boots are the defence for the legs.

The wives of mechanics and Russ merchants dress with more taste and costliness. Their gowns are of rich brocade, and their heads fantastically adorned with pearls. Their cloaks are shaped like the doublet of Sir John Falstaff, and of the same materials; being velvet, either crimson, scarlet, or purple, lined and caped with sable fur of the most expensive sort. They also wear boots, made of leather or velvet, according to the pecuniary ability of the purchaser. Indeed this invention for the comfort of the leg is so respected here, that the smallest infants, just able to crawl, are encumbered sooner with boots than with shirts.

I must not omit to mention one odd custom. As soon as a woman enters into the happy state of matrimony, she binds up the whole of her hair beneath the dress of her head. In the days of her maidenhood she wears it platted, like the Chinese, and tied with a bunch of ribbands at the end. I could not learn the origin of this practice: and like many unaccountable usages in other countries, I believe it is now followed merely because it is an ancient custom.

Russia contains but two classes of people, the nobles and the slaves. If a third may be admitted (and such a one is rapidly creating itself), it will be the merchants. Should we mingle foreigners with the natives, we have then a decided third class already, composed of merchants and other genteel settlers from various countries. Including these, with the inhabitants and

military of the city, I am told that three hundred thousand is nearly the population of St. Petersburgh. If we estimate the divisions of so numerous an assemblage, what a multitudinous body must be the slaves. Probably thirty thousand may be the amount of the aliens: and if we allow seventy thousand for the court and the military, then two hundred thousand are the residue of the populace, or slaves. These latter people, who are usually slaves to the crown or the nobles, are universally good-natured, and possess a wonderful ingenuity and quickness of apprehension. At present their shrewdness is so apparent in bargains, that if in making any, you do not compel them to give written articles of agreement, you may be sure of being cheated in every possible way. A little while ago I spoke of their Spartan modes of speech; I can also pay them the compliment of registering their Spartan mode of action, as a dextrous theft in the way of overreaching, is regarded by them as the very triumph of their genius.

Formerly the whole nation was most lamentably addicted to inebriety: but the exertions and example of Peter the Great soon rooted out this detestable practice from amongst the higher orders; and at the same time laid the exterminating ax to many other vices of similar enormity. However fond the ancient nobility may have been of *the mantling goblet's sparkling juice*, their modern descendants are the most abstemious with regard to wine and other strong liquids, I ever met with. Drunkenness is nowhere to be seen but with the lower ranks; and they, like the swine in the gospel, have so potently imbibed the foul fiend, as to be carried headlong to their destruction. During the chilling blasts of winter, when the congealed blood seems to demand some generous cordial to dissolve its rigidity and warm the heart, it is then that we see the intoxicated native stagger forth from some open door, reel from side to side, and meet that fate which in the course of one season freezes thousands to death. The common career of a poor creature thus bewildered, is truly distressing. After spending perhaps his last *copeck* in a dirty, hot *kaback* or public house, he is thrust out by the keeper as an object no longer worthy of his attention. Away the impetus carries him, till he is brought

up by the opposite wall. Heedless of any injury he may have sustained by the shock, he rapidly pursues the weight of his head, by the assistance of his treacherous heels, howling discordant sounds from some incoherent Russian song; a religious fit will frequently interrupt his harmony, when crossing himself several times, and as often muttering his *gospodi pomilui*, "Lord have mercy upon us!" he reels forward: whether these devout ejaculations may arise from a presentiment of his fate, or some faint glimpse of the danger of his situation, I cannot pretend to say: but so it is, for a few moments, at different intervals; and then he tears the air again with his loud and national ditties: staggering and stumbling till his foot slips, and that earth receives him, whence a thousand chances are, that he will never again arise. He lies just as he fell; and sings himself gradually to that sleep from which he awakes no more. Thus, like the heroes on Hohenlinden, the snow becomes his *windingsheet;* and the bitter blast alone now fills the air, no longer agitated by the abrupt murmurs of his fading voice.

During one severe winter, that so terrible to Europe, in the year 1789, terrible to you and me, like any other tale of other times, only by tradition; it spent its rage in the careless days of our infancy; but, alas, how many storms of the elements and of the world have beat upon us since!—But to return. During that winter the cold was so inveterate in Russia, that on the road between St. Petersburgh and Mosco, not less than fourteen thousand persons perished from its fury. You may imagine how certain is death to the individual who falls asleep in an open atmosphere of twenty-five degrees of frost, when I tell you that the birds often drop dead and stiff from the trees; and water reaches the ground in a congealed state when thrown at this season from any height.

As I have not been neglectful of the defence of my person against this allpenetrating enemy; and as my preservatives are *synonymous* with those in general use, I will give you an idea of the comfort and *graces* of my figure when winterly accoutred. On the head is worn a turban-formed cap of sable; a large cloak, called a *shoub*, with arms, lined throughout with bear, Siberian fox, racoon, or other skins, covers the body, reaching to the

ticles: it wraps well round the wearer, being well caped and cuffed with the fur. A sort of shoes called *kangees*, of elk or calfskin, rough both within and without, fence the feet. Those who do not use these, wear large leather or velvet boots, flannelled or furred, which are drawn over the ordinary appendages to the legs. Thus habited it is scarcely possible to recognise your friends, or even to trace out a single lineament of a human creature. For sooner on the first glance of so strange a figure, would you mistake it for some fierce nondescript monster, than suppose it possible to be an intellectual being. How often, when I have seen one of these rugged forms, ready appointed for the sledge, conversing with some lovely female, have I thought of the pretty fairy tale of *Beauty and the Beast!* And that the idea is a tolerable picture of our appearance when so habited, you will see, *vide* my drawing. My present reference to the story which has so often charmed our infancy; and my frequent appeals to the accompanying sketches, must remind you of the little gilded books we used to turn over together in that blissful morning of our lives; when, as we read a hurried description of some wonderful animal, a unicorn for instance, we would be delightfully cut short with a *See here it is!* written over a form as much like the truth as a trumpet. Indeed, were you not to yield as large a proportion of faith to me, as we formerly did to our unknown authors, you would hardly believe, were I even to write under my drawing *this is a man*, that it were not rather a Russian bear, or as I said before, a hairy monster without a name.

Any of the extremities being more than usually exposed to the air, are apt to be frozen; and if proper precautions be not taken in gradually thawing them, the suffering party may pass the remainder of his days, deprived perhaps of his nasal promontory; or be subject to the illiberality of public conjecture of how he might have lost his ears. Besides, there are the inconveniencies of curtailed feet or hands; and the pain of a tender visage, from the scarifying of the skin. It is scarcely possible to convey to you an idea of the sensation produced by a bleak wind blowing in your face in an atmosphere of seventeen degrees of cold. Suppose it already stripped of the cuta-

neous covering, and scraped rapidly all over with the fragment of a rusty iron hoop, or an old piece of pumice stone:—this, believe me, my good friend, is but a faint attempt to impress you with the torment of such Borean kisses. Few of the higher orders submit their persons to these rough salutations, always moving about in carriages when they are not shut up in close rooms. I believe the reason why the English, who have been long dwellers in Russia, yet retain their fresh, British complexion, is because, notwithstanding the extreme cold, they continue their daily bodily exercise in the open air.

The winter habiliments of the ladies are much more graceful than those of the men, being warm without many extraordinary enfoldings. Not exposing themselves, as our sex are often obliged to do, to the outward atmosphere, they do not require such a labyrinth of fur to exclude the cold. Their attire differs little from that worn in England; and makes no sensible variation to the eye, except a little more *en bon point* in the appearance, as the dresses are wadded throughout; a practice that is indispensable; for a cold caught in this climate almost immediately engenders the most dangerous fevers; and life is too often the forfeit for an hour's indiscretion.

The fair of this metropolis are not in general very formidable rivals to those of other capitals which I have visited. There are some very fine women, but the majority have small claims to the title of beautiful. Their features are rather of the kalmuc cast; and from the sedentary habits they acquire, nature soon allows the rose of their charms to blow into too full luxuriance. Like exotics in a hothouse, the artificial heat brings them to untimely maturity; and they fade away, even at the moment when we expect to find them at their highest bloom. But it is only their exterior which thus changes. At the age of thirty, or thirty-five, the face may be withered, the figure overgrown; but still youth is in the mind and the heart: and conversing with these charming women, you soon forget that she who discourses with the wit of Thalia or the grace of Erato, does not also possess the beauty of Venus as well as her tenderness. You must recollect that this is only the general description of the ladies in this city. There are many exquisite exceptions:

and when we consider their mode of life, we can only wonder that there are any. Stoved rooms, fresh air excluded, no exercise, hot suppers; all tend to demolish the shape, destroy the complexion, and impair the health.

My observations on the Russian fair have hitherto been confined to St. Petersburgh, and I am desired not to be too hasty in forming my judgment. When I penetrate further into the interior, I shall then see the true Muscovite character; and be better able to inform you whether the blood of Circassia, mingling with the Russ, has been more propitious to the formation of beauty than the wide intermixture of marriages on the banks of the Neva.

There are several very lovely Polish women here at present and also a few from our little island. Their gentle countenances, affable manners, and affectionate hearts, are sweet remembrancers of home; and draw my thoughts so entirely thitherward, that I can add no more, but that I am ever, at all distances, and in every climate, dearest friend, yours most faithfully.

LETTER XII.

St. Petersburg , November, 1805.

TO strangers, accustomed to the various changes produced in men and things by the influence of intense frost, nothing appears more wonderful or note-worthy than that part of the city dedicated to the sale of frozen provisions. Your astonished sight is there arrested by a vast open square, containing the bodies of many thousand animals piled in pyramidical heaps on all sides. Cows, sheep, hogs, fowls, butter, eggs, fish, all are stiffened into granite.

The fish are attractively beautiful; possessing the vividness of their living colours, with the transparent clearness of wax imitations. The beasts present a far less pleasing spectacle. Most of the largest sort being skinned, and classed according to their species; groups of many hundreds are seen piled up on their hind legs against one another, as if each were making an effort to climb over the back of its neighbour. The motionless apparent animation of their seemingly struggling attitudes (as if suddenly seized in moving, and petrified by frost), gives a horrid life to this dead scene. Had an enchanter's wand been instantaneously waved over this *sea* of animals during their different actions, they could not have been fixed more decidedly. Their hardness, too, is so extreme, that the natives chop them up for the purchaser, like wood; and the chips of their carcasses fly off in the same way as splinters do from masses of timber or coal.

A hatchet, the favourite instrument of the country, is used in the operation; as indeed it is generally applied to every other act of ingenuity or strength. Sometimes to things so nicely delicate, that if the boors were taught to write, I have little doubt but their pens would be made and repaired with it.

But to return to the market. The provisions collected here are the product of countries many thousand versts beyond Mosco. Siberia, Archangel, and still remoter provinces, furnish the merchandize, which during the frost's severity is

conveyed hither on sledges. In consequence of the multitudes of these commodities, and the short period allowed to the existence of the market, they are cheaper than at any other part of the year; and are therefore bought in large quantities to be laid up as winter stock. When deposited in cellars they keep good for a length of time.

At certain hours every day the market, while it lasts, is a fashionable lounge. There you meet all the beauty and gaiety of St. Petersburgh; even from the imperial family down to the Russ merchant's wife. Incredible crowds of sledges, carriages, and pedestrians, throng the place: the different groups of spectators, purchasers, venders, and commodities, form such an extraordinary *tout ensemble* as no other city is known to equal.

During this mart of congealed merchandize, affecting scenes often occur. The provisions, I have already told you, are transported from the most remote provinces of this vast empire. Consequently the infinitude of sledges necessary for their conveyance are accompanied by boors. It is not often the case, that for more than one season the same persons travel with them; and this change of conductors is produced by motives more honourable, more powerful than interest itself.

Whenever a new levy is made for the army, a given number (according to the state's necessity) is taken from every five hundred slaves capable of bearing arms. Most of the villages have been thus deprived of some of their inhabitants; and it is with the affectionate hope of again seeing their different relatives, that many very aged men accompany these frozen caravans. St. Petersburgh is the extent of their views. The knowledge of that city and of their own village, bounds their geographic acquirements: it is thither all their wishes tend; for to that spot alone, they falsely believe, is fixed the object of their fond solicitude. Ignorant of any particular corps, and only conscious that it is a *soldier* they seek, under the liveliest impressions of expectation and affection, they momentarily look for the blessing of again embracing a son, a brother, or some other near and beloved kinsman. Actuated by similar feelings, hundreds of soldiers (after their military duties are

over for the day) are seen going from group to group, searching for their own parents amongst these patriarchal strangers. To the observation of a benevolent individual, these scenes are delightful. Nothing can be more affecting than to witness their joyful meetings; fathers embracing their sons, brothers their brothers. But expressions of disappointment and envy at their comrades good fortune, frequently excite more distressing sympathies; and the heart saddens while listening to the impatient inquiries of many, who are soon deprived of their dearest hopes, by the information that another country contains their offspring: perhaps another world.

My pencil would but feebly trace a scene which can only be pictured by the feelings. I must therefore plead its inability; and for my pen, how weak too is its description! Thy reflective, and finely tempered mind, my friend, would here have much food for rumination. How gladly should I listen to thoughts which were ever as full of wisdom as of sympathy! In witnessing this scene, wouldst thou not gather interesting details of humble and domestic love, its joys and disappointments; and clothed in thy pure and touching language, how would they penetrate the heart! But though heaven has not gifted me with eloquence, I am not quite unblest with the spirit whence it springs: and, therefore, feeling all the tenderness of private interests, I am not less sensible to that disinterestedness which loses the soft comforts of life in devotion to the public weal.

Writing of these sons and brothers, who go far from their families, to defend their country's honour, reminds me of a recent act of their courage, when led on by the invincible arm of one of their most distinguished generals. Knowing that your heart beats in unison with every deed of true heroism, I cannot refrain from repeating it here.

The name of prince Bagration is well known to you. His already hardearned laurels, gathered on the plains of Italy, and snatched from the precipices of St. Gothard, have established his reputation as a soldier for ever. He is indeed the Sir Sidney of Russia! possessing the same intrepid enterprise, dauntless perseverance, and a resolution to overcome, which no opposi-

tion can withstand. How often have you dwelt with admiration on the narrative of his actions in Italy; how often have we, together, commented with delight on the bravery with which he extricated his troops from the difficulties into which the misfortunes of others had led him! He seems fated to be thus involved; and thus bring himself out from danger with increased glory to himself and honour to his soldiers.

The late affair on the advance of the main body of the Russian army under the gallant General Kutauzoff, is a new instance of his presence of mind; and how much more powerful men are when sound military knowledge directs the points of their bayonets. His command was a small one; not over more than four thousand men, who formed the rear guard of Kutauzoff's army. That General, from several unforeseen circumstances, found himself obliged to pursue his march; and so leave the troops of the Prince in the extremest peril. General Murat, meanwhile, with an incalculable force threw himself between these two divisions, and totally cut off all communication betwixt the rear and the main body of the Russians. The French troops surrounded those of Bagration. The experience and ever-wakeful attention of the prince made him fully comprehend his situation, and determined him, instead of yielding the day as lost, to keep the enemy on the alert; and so gain time for the troops under Kutauzoff to advance beyond the reach of the enemy. At the moment he took this resolution, he well knew the price he should pay for carrying it into execution. To preserve the main body of the army he must sacrifice the lives of his heroic followers, and lay down his own. But that appeared to him the lesser evil. Their deaths would secure the escape of the great hope of Russia, its concentrated troops, it bravest generals, and he made no hesitation in taking his choice.

A messenger was sent to him from the enemy, importing that it would be for the mutual advantage of both parties, if the commanders of each army should have a conference before the advanced posts. Bagration acquiesced, and was attended thither by the brave Dolgorucky alone, whilst Murat appeared with a concourse of generals and aides-de-camp. The

purport of this meeting was to inform the Russian prince that articles of peace had been signed between Austria and France; and that in consequence the Russian troops were to retire within their own frontiers. Every argument which falsehood could invent, and subtlety enforce, was brought forward to persuade Bagration of the truth of what was affirmed.

"Where are your credentials for this, General Murat?"

"My honour!"

"The interview is finished," replied the prince; "I shall pursue the orders of my emperor."

"Then you will not retreat?" demanded Murat; "if you advance, your road must be through the breasts of sixty thousand Frenchmen."

Bagration felt the mightiness of his course. He returned to his troops, and addressing them as his brothers in glory, named the host by which they were surrounded. "If," cried he, "we would regain the main army, we must hew our passage through their hearts."

The soldiers, worthy of their intrepid commander, exclaimed in one voice, "Lead us on! You are with us, victory before us! we follow!"

Bagration seized a bayonet and rushed upon the French. He was not alone, for his brave followers were a phalanx at his side: his heroic soul seemed to animate all their hearts, and give an herculean vigour to their arms as they mowed down the opposing ranks, and spread the bloody field with the writhing bodies of *imperial republicans*. It was an action which might rival that of Thermopylæ: but it met a better fate. Bagration was victorious: he had preserved the main army by his resistance; he now saved his divisions with inconsiderable loss; and soon formed a junction with Kutauzoff. Two thousand of the enemy were killed in the field, and fifteen hundred taken prisoners, with several stand of colours.

To the sudden boldness of the attack may be attributed much of its effect. Murat, aware of his numbers and advantages, deemed any serious opposition on the part of Bagration as so desperate, that he regarded his brave menace as nothing more than a sort of theatrical gasconade to render his exit a

little more respectable. Any attempt to cut through the French he thought was to meet inevitable defeat and death: and, therefore, when the blow really was struck, it fell like electricity; astonishment and confusion were the consequences on the side of the French: and general Murat had the mortification to see the plain strewn with his own dead; and the invincible Russian march off the field a conqueror, at the head of his victorious and unthinned ranks.

This incident shows how necessary that spirit is to a soldier, which knows when to prefer action before deliberation. There are moments when a general must decide by a kind of brave instinct, and throw himself at once into the arms of the giant Danger; grapple to him, and with a resistless heart fling him to the ground. If he wait till the tremendous power springs upon him, the weight may be too heavy, the shock too great, and he sink to the earth overwhelmed and perishing. There is a difference between rashness and this intrepid daring. The situation must warrant the hazard, and then it is glorious to seize the peril and put it to the issue of a fall. It is this spirit which makes Great Britain now the mistress of the waves.

I cannot dismiss my subject without relating a circumstance that happened during this last gallant exploit of the Russian prince. A grenadier had been separated from his line, as it hurried forward to attack the French. At this crisis he was assailed by four of the enemy, one officer and three soldiers. On perceiving them approach with fury in their eyes and gestures, like his general he determined to sell his life dearly, and calling on "God and Suwarroff!" he met the first with the contents of his piece: seeing him dead at his feet, he received the second on the point of his bayonet: the brains of the third he beat out with the butend of his musket; and would have sent the soul of the fourth after those of his comrades, had not the Frenchman's heels stood his friend, and carried him far from danger. The undaunted soldier, seeing the coast clear, quietly regained his regiment, and fell into his place in the ranks with silence and regularity, as if nothing had happened.

Prince Bagration did not neglect so extraordinary a proof of martial resolution. And some time afterwards, having commu-

nicated it to the emperor, that generous monarch (who makes his favour, like the sun, shine on the worthy of all degrees) ordered him a purse of a hundred ducats, and promoted him to the rank of a subaltern officer.

Bagration and Kutauzoff are now on the frontiers. The brave Alexander is also gone thither; but whether to take the command or not, we are ignorant. However, at any rate, the presence of so beloved a sovereign must impart new animation to his troops. He was set out before my arrival; hence I have not yet had the happiness of paying my personal obeisances to so much true imperial dignity. In the course of a few days, I hope to be in presence with the fair of his illustrious family; and then you shall hear again from your friend.

LETTER XIII.

St. Petersburgh, November, 1805.

I HAVE been at court. It was at the anniversary of St. Nicholas; a day held sacred by the Russians; as they often wait for its return in order to fight a battle, storm a city, or commence any other momentous enterprise.

We arrived at the Winter Palace about eleven o'clock in the forenoon, and followed the gentleman who introduced us, into a large saloon where numbers of officers and nobility were assembled, waiting the imperial family's arrival. Not many minutes elapsed before a bustle at the lower end of the apartment announced the entrance of the court. The expecting crowd then opened to right and left. Thirty gentlemen in rich embroidered suits passed along: these were what they term *les chamberlains actuel;* each having a golden key and blue ribbon, the insignia of their rank, attached to his frock. The young empress, dressed in white sattin and gold, then followed.

Her person is not tall, yet it is graceful and elegantly proportioned; and the air of it is tender and interesting. Her eyes

are soft and blue; her complexion touchingly delicate. I wished that hideous thing called a hoop devoutly at the devil, as it hid the lower part of her figure, and cruelly lengthened the confinement of her waist: this barbarous remnant of Gothic taste always destroys those graces inseparable from the female form in its natural state. However, notwithstanding these dis advantages, the shape of the young empress was charming.

There was an air of melancholy about her which added ten thousand beauties to a countenance already sufficiently lovely. This gentle sadness is easily accounted for. It is known to arise from the present absence of the emperor, who is gone to meet danger, and perhaps death; and the recollection of a sweet infant, of whom that inexorable ravager of our earthly happiness has lately deprived her, and whose loss she still deeply regrets.

As she passed through the long line of military nobles, she honoured us on each side with the most smiling affability; and her small regular features expressed a soft urbanity, almost approaching timidity. Her voice is peculiarly melodious.

After the empress, a long retinue of ladies of honour, noblemen, &c. followed: we fell into the train (for two of our countrymen accompanied me), and entered the chapel. This consecrated apartment is not very large; and does not differ materially in form from those I have already mentioned, except that its decorations are of a more gorgeous kind and a finer taste. Gold, paintings, and bronze, form the skreen. A huge chandelier of massive silver hangs from the ceiling, and is always lighted. Numerous choristers, habited in scarlet robes richly embroidered, were ranged in opposite lines. Her majesty (for she was the only one of the imperial family present, the rest being indisposed), was advanced several paces before her attendants, and stood the whole of the service, which lasted above an hour.

When the religious rites were over, the metropolitan bishop, urrounded by other ecclesiastics, came from the interior to salute the empress. She presented them her hand which they pressed to their lips, while she at the same moment put her right cheek to theirs (the usual mode of friendly salutation

here). The contrast of this group was strikingly picturesque. The young empress's lovely lilylike form, and splendid attire, opposed to the solemn grandeur of the father's robes (whose long and silver beard swept his bosom); the equally venerable appearance of the other divines; and the gay habits and martial uniforms of the surrounding young noblemen, formed altogether a scene of interesting and brilliant effect. Foreign officers, Cossacks, Georgians, and princes from the interior provinces, completed this romantic picture.

No sooner was the ceremony of salutation past, than all returned in the former order. I did not linger behind, for my heart loitered not with any of the courtly damsels who had passed: and yet they were *passing fair;* very fair, had not the superior charms of the empress, like those of the radiant Diana, cast all her sparkling attendants into shade.

Amongst the many accomplishments boasted by the Russian ladies is one, on which the saucy prejudice against the sex might be very malapert: I mean their wonderful facility in learning languages. Almost all modern tongues are easy to them; and French is even so much more familiar than their own, that they speak and write it with fluency, when they can hardly spell a word in their native Russ. The neglect of the latter language is not surprising, as it is hardly ever spoken in polite circles; being totally confined to deeds of state, law, and ecclesiastical acts. But with the language of France, that strange perverted nation has not exported its systems of ethics, nor its superficial, glossing manners. The nobility of Russia are honest, frank, and hospitable. A something about them still exists which reminds you that Muscovy and England first shook hands in the days of our good queen Bess. There is a hardihood, at the same time a courtliness of demeanour, that recals to recollection the prowess of sir Francis Drake, the gallantry of sir Walter Raleigh. What Elizabeth was to England, Catherine the Second was to Russia: the effects remain: after the flower is cropt and laid in the tomb, its fragrance survives and embalms the surrounding atmosphere.

Owing to the peculiar constitution of this empire, the arts and sciences are, in general, but secondary objects in the

minds of the natives. The nobles deem no profession honourable but that of arms. Ambition would be thought to stoop, if it sought any celebrity from excelling by the chissel, the pencil, or the pen: hence, the finest talents among the highborn are never directed towards any of these points. Military glory is all their aim: and, if it chances to be united with the spontaneous growth of any milder genius, it is well; the possessor is pleased, and his friends delighted; but no fame accrues from classical endowments. The study of the arts and sciences is left to slaves; or at best, to slaves made free: and they, unhappy men! from being descended from that contemned race, can never, by any exertions of their own, or by the conclusive appeal of appropriate actions, assert the inherent nobility of the heavenly gifted mind. Slavery is a taint that can never be erased: and thus the generous ambition of genius is cankered at the very root.

The usual pastimes of the nobles, when they are not pursuing military exercises, or employed in offices of state, are the carriage or the sledge during the morning. They dine at half past two o'clock, and after that either sleep for a couple of hours (for they do not sit long at table), or play at games of cards, of which there are a great variety; billiards is also a frequent amusement; but the most favourite is a game called *Boston*, a sort of whist: it is not known with us; and yet, strange to tell, the Russians say it was invented by the British officers during the campaigns in America. The evening produces the theatre, or assemblies at their own houses, when, either cards are again resorted to, or a light dance exhilarates the scene, to which the company who prefer sitting, play on the pianoforte and harp. Various little pastimes, such as forfeits, the magic music, &c. &c. are brought forward. And thus wit and innocent mirth carry on the hours till supper is announced. This meal is generally too luxurious for the health and beauty of those who draw round the table. Soups, fish, roast and boiled meats, and savoury dishes, fill the groaning board. Good appetites are seldom wanting; and thus, both mentally and bodily recreated, or rather overburthened, do the parties betake themselves to rest: their stomachs fevered with the richest food, they lie down in bed

rooms where an artificial heat, like that of a hothouse, ferments their digestion, leaving them at waking, pale, languid, and spiritless. This is the common mode: but where experience has opened the eyes of some, and travel informed others, such injurious customs are set aside; and we behold, as in England, the blooming cheek of a Hebe rising brightly with the morn; and the athletic form of manhood moving with all the freshness of health, all the elasticity of youthful vigour.

I am interrupted by a message from my friend at the ambassador's, that *great news have arrived from England!* I go to learn the tidings; and hope, before I finish this letter, to congratulate you on some glorious event for our country and for Europe.

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Days have elapsed since I could return to this paper. An event indeed! great and momentous to the whole world! "How have the mighty fallen, and weapons of war perished!" Nelson, our brave, our invincible Nelson is no more! Heaven, then, in the moment of victory, took from England her never failing hope. Dear has our country paid for the glory of Trafalgar: but it is a glory that will cast the Corsican star into shadow: it must shine in every British heart for ever; and at the hour of danger, whether in the field or on the wave, go before them like a pillar of fire to light them to fame and victory. Yea, even though hosts oppose them, will not his last words rally their souls to stand? "*England expects every man to do his duty!*" What a war cry is that! What an arousing call to those who have been his compeers! What a summons to deeds of honour to generations yet unborn! To dwell on the bright name of a departed hero, how does it inspire the mind to emulate his example! To die like a *Wolfe* or a *Nelson*, is a destiny so great, that cold must be the heart which is not awakened to enthusiasm and patriotic zeal when it recals their life and death to remembrance. Who would not partake their bed with joy? Defending your country, opposing your breast as a shield between England and her enemies, let the balls come: if they strike, it is for thousands your life is given. VICTORY! safety to your country, the preservation of relations,

friends, countrymen, all are in that word! So *Wolfe* died, and so *Nelson* fell! The shout of triumph arose, and the soul took its flight to heaven; angels receive it, and as a benefactor of mankind, it takes its happy seat amongst hosts of kindred, blissful spirits! Here, this is the bright career of the real hero. His sword is drawn for justice alone; to defend, not to oppress; and thus his laurels are immortal as the fields of paradise. But those of the mere conqueror, the invader of neighbouring countries, the usurper of others' right, where are they? What is he? Though his exterminating brand laid the whole universe at his feet, he is still only a conqueror, a murderer of mankind; and though fame may speak of his deeds, glory can never surround them. Glory can be attached to nothing that is not virtuous. We fear the tyrant, but it is only the hero that we revere. Where were the tears which fell for the Timurs of any age or nation? Behold those which flow for Nelson! England mourns him as a parent, as a protecting genius ravaged from her shores. And distant nations, they mingle their sighs with her's: to every quarter where his victorious and guardian standard flew, have the news of his death been sent; and grievous has been the lamentation. In being the champion of liberty and honour, he was the champion of all mankind; and as such, he who fought for all, is wept by all.

The account of this memorable event was transmitted to the Russian army on the frontiers, and there read to the emperor Alexander by his surgeon, a Scotch gentleman, who is as worthy of the country in which he was born, as of the imperial confidence. The tidings struck the emperor in the most forcible manner; and while his brave eyes filled with tears, he uttered such an eulogium on the merits of the departed hero, as, could he be sensible of human tribute, must be a sweet incense to his immortalized spirit. Indeed I should not do justice to the Russians were I not to say that the general feeling they express for our Nelson is that of men regretting the loss of a dear brother. Their rejoicings for the victory of Trafalgar are chastened by the idea that the hand which won it is now disabled for ever in the grave.

Such is the drawback to our triumph: and I am sorry to say, that we anticipate even another alloy to our joy. It is

rumoured that a battle has been fought between the combined forces of Austria and Russia, with those of France; and that the result obliged the emperor of Germany to make an immediate peace with the enemy. The emperor Alexander and his forces, indignant at what has happened, are on their return home. Long before this arrives in England, you will have received from the scene of action, more certain intelligence of this disastrous affair. At present the report is, that the principal failure lay on the side of the Austrians: nay, if it be true what is said, failure is too gentle an epithet for their conduct; rather baseness and treachery, in the worst sense of the words. The rumour goes that a large body of the Austrians not only deserted to the French, but even fired upon the Russians, whom they had brought thither as their allies and protectors; thus adding ingratitude to their deep dishonour. How must such a stigma on his countrymen pierce the heart of the Archduke Charles! But he still exists, and virtue may yet revive in Austria.

The loss which the brave Russians have sustained, they say, is very considerable. The enemy too, have had a most dear victory. But I have no doubt that in the usual style of these *ci-devant republicans*, it will be proudly set forth as an achievement of their arms with little damage on their side, and no infamy whatever. In those accounts which they give to the world, nothing is said of their bribery, their corruptions, their deceits, their falsehood: the net is nowhere spoken of that is spread by wiles under the feet of monarchs; the golden draught is nowhere mentioned which poisons their counsellors, and lays their honesty and vigour asleep. Ministers, not their sovereigns, often seal the misery of thousands.

The public are cajoled by being told that all the conquests of France are the effects of dauntless bravery alone: hence its leader is deified as a kind of god. But look under the purple that invests him, and there you will see the serpent's wily train. He is bold, he has great talents, and insatiable ambition; and he was placed on a stage where he might exert all. In such a situation, when once a man forgets that he is an accountable being, when he determines to live to his desires alone, how easy is it for him to glut them to the utmost. No check

menaces him but that of fortune: bowing to no God but his ambition, faith, honour, life, death, are as nothing in his hands: he throws them to the right or left as they impede his course; and makes straight forward over the neck of groaning nature to his goal.

Bonaparte has now all Germany at his command. Kings, they say, are to be speedily created, and the whole of the country to be newly divided. Intermarriages between the Corsican's relations and ancient princely families are to be formed; the better to build up the foundations of the universal empire he seems to meditate. He does indeed "bestride the globe;" and sets its rightful sovereigns to "peep about beneath his huge legs to find themselves dishonourable graves." There is something very awful in the idea of how great may be the fall of this colossus. He is a tremendous object; a chastising instrument in the hand of Providence! And, when the nations have undergone the scourge, what may then be the "wo to him by whom their evils came?" These are mysteries beyond my comprehension: but they are mysteries of heaven, and it becomes us to adore in silence. Adieu.

LETTER XIV.

St. Petersburgh, December, 1805.

ALL is too true! The allies have been defeated, and a fearful blow has been given to the great cause of Europe. But, as I said before, you have better accounts of the affair than we can have here; so I will no further enlarge on what must so deeply affect us all. I know the disaster has happened; but I am yet ignorant of the particulars, for there are here no public national prints, except one or two in the Russ language, very sparingly communicative. Even the English newspapers which come hither, are delivered so irregularly, that the chain of their information is miserably destroyed. However, we shall learn more in a day or two, as the emperor is hourly expected. When he arrives you shall have my sentiments of this amiable and idolized monarch. Meanwhile, I will interest you in the virtues of the illustrious widow of his predecessor, the good dowager empress.

How can I do it better than by giving you a sketch of an institution which reflects the highest honour upon its august patroness? Ever since the death of the late emperor the occupation of this princess's life has been to institute, protect, and advance charitable foundations of every description. In short, we have in dear England scarcely one from which she has not drawn some philanthropic hint. To the proper regulation of these charities almost the whole of her time is dedicated.

The hospital in question, was instituted forty years ago; and is in truth but a branch of one more extensive at Mosco. It is designed for the reception of foundlings. The number of little deserted souls now within the walls of this blessed asylum at St. Petersburgh, is nearly six hundred. When I went over the house the matron showed me eight lovely infants which had been left that very day at the place appointed for their reception. To obtain admission for her child, the mother of one of these poor little beings at a certain hour repairs secretly to a given spot, where depositing her charge in a wicker basket, along with some relic of affectionate remembrance, (perhaps

nothing but tears!) she pulls a bell, on which it is instantly taken from her sight, in all probability for ever.

The infants (arranged in wards and classes according to their age), are watched during the helpless period of existence with maternal care. When their mental and bodily powers are capable of useful occupation, they are instructed in such arts or employments as may render them advantageous to that state which is so justly entitled to their filial gratitude. The girls are taught first to make the different parts of their habiliments; then to manufacture fringe, lace, and an exquisite embroidery, which is used on court dresses, funeral palls, and sacerdotal robes. The boys are made alert in tayloring, shoemaking, and similar occupations of public utility. By this means the capital is supplied with industrious mechanics of both sexes: by this means the humanity of the state turns private indiscretion into national benefit; and not only thousands of innocent creatures are preserved in existence, but many, many a parent is saved from the most horrid of crimes.

I must not omit telling you that there is a part of this institution dedicated to females *under* "*a state of maternal solicitude.*" The peculiar good intended by the reception of women so circumstanced, is, not only to render them assistance, but to furnish subjects of instruction for a certain number of girls who are destined to practise midwifery. After being properly qualified, these young persons are distributed throughout the most distant provinces of the empire; and thus become blessings to the ignorant, suffering peasant.

Cleanliness reigns in every part of the Foundling Hospital. The various wards are airy and commodious. Each foundling has a small separate bed (very clean and neat), over which is written the name of the occupier, with its supposed age, and the date of its admission. When the foundlings attain the age of twenty-one, I am told that a pecuniary donation, and a certificate of their conduct, ushers them into the wide world.

This excellent charity is not only furnished with unexceptionable superintendants for the advanced classes, but anxious care is taken to supply the infants with the nourishment allotted to them by nature. For this purpose, great numbers of hale, stout women, who have newly become mothers, are brought

from the villages of Ingria and Finland, in droves like milch cows; who (after their health is ascertained), are distributed over the hospital.

In my life I never saw such wretched, humiliating specimens of human nature! their odious appearance struck me the more horribly when I remembered that they were of the *angelic* sex. Imagination cannot paint their strange costume, their stupid countenances; the sallow mahogany-coloured flesh of their uncouth flabby persons, their settled vacancy of stare, and complete nonentity of expression. The duty marked out for these poor creatures to fulfil, is the loveliest and most interesting one in which a woman can appear: but here, alas! disgust is the only feeling excited. While surveying them, I could not help making a comparison between their aspects and the wetnurses of England. The latter, all health and roses; their eyes beaming a simple philanthropic affection over the little helpless being thus succoured; their persons firm as marble; and their whole air vouching for their imparting the riches of a good constitution to the child whom a mother's inability, perhaps, has consigned to their care.

But to return to my Russians. At one period there was such a superabundance of the *living fruits* of love or immorality, that a sufficient number of these temporary parents could not be procured. To supply the deficiency goats were substituted, and for some time answered well; but from unavoidable change in this animal's food during a few months in the year, it was found that the children thus feed *à la Romulus*, grew sickly; the practice was therefore discontinued. When nursed by a goat, the infant was held under the stomach of the beast to suck; which position possibly prevented it from taking its nourishment peaceably.

If (as it is said) the temper, propensities, and constitution are transmitted by our *lacteal* food, they who have been thus subsisted will make but heavy members of society; for little of the graceful or the active in spirit can be augured from the foster children of Fins, goats and asses. Yet perhaps the inconveniencies may not be very great; as the destined pursuits of these oddly-nurtured mortals seldom require either very laborious or very brilliant exertions of the mind.

Being on the subject of nurses, I will dismiss those of the Foundling Hospital, and introduce to your notice such as attend upon the children of the nobility. No part in the domestic arrangement of a Russian family is more curious to a stranger. These women are selected with great care from amongst the numerous slaves of their proprietor; and come, perhaps, from some very distant village to cherish the youthful count or prince. Their dress (which is national and characteristic), always marks their occupation.

On their head they wear a wrought gold cap of stiff materials, taking an enlarged form, like the diadem usually given to Juno; the whole of its gilded surface is profusely but awkwardly spread with pearls, foils, cutglass, &c. Their ears and neck are loaded with showy ornaments; and their brawny shoulders are half hidden by an exquisitely white shift, gaily worked in various colours even to the sleeves, which are loose and hang as low as the elbow. Their body is *easily* confined in a sort of boddice or jumps made *suitably convenient for their profession.* A gaudily embroidered petticoat, with coloured stockings and shoes, terminates the decoration of their person. On the whole they are clean, and do not *olfac* like most other Russian domestics. This latter qualification is truly estimable, as they are generally allowed a seat in the carriage whenever mama goes out; and frequently appear in the rooms destined for company.

At the expiration of the period allotted for their attendance as nurses, they receive a liberal reward; and are permitted to return to their village and boorish husband with all the *elegancies* of their wardrobe. Too often does this savage ruler squander their money and sell their gaieties. While brandy (that powerful persuader to cruelty and vice!) is to be procured, the last kopeck is eagerly expended to purchase it. These uncivilized husbands are by no means *patient* of any refusal from their wives, or *delicate* in their choice of *argument* to enforce submission: for I have beheld such hearty drubbings dealt out upon the shoulders of the sisterhood, as would have been the death of any other woman than a Russian peasant.

I am sorry to say that this mode of compelling obedience is not confined to the boor alone. The domestics in every family

being slaves, they as much belong to their lord, as the chairs and tables of the house; and are, in general, treated too much like mere pieces of furniture. While they do their duty it is well; they are quietly used according to their appropriate service; but as fellow creatures they are seldom considered. Should they transgress, they are taught better by a *manege* something like that our countrymen exercise on the backs of their asses. This system is so abhorred by the benevolent Alexander, that he takes every opportunity of buying the estates of the nobles, and immediately giving freedom to the peasants. By this generous policy he removes the yoke from their necks, and brings forward into freedom and occasions of earning an honest and independent subsistence, a race of men who will soon form themselves into the most useful part of the body politic; that middle rank, which is the sinew of a nation's strength, the source of her riches, and the guardian of her glory.

We need only turn our eyes to England to see the proof of this. Look at her wealthy yeomanry, her merchants as princes; and her commons sitting at the helm of state, and equal in power with the nobility, guiding it in safety and honour through all the shocks of contending empires! Blest England! Wherever I go, I still think on my country, as a lover of the dear mistress he has left behind. Many he may behold fairer and more richly attired; but still, the heart, the heart! The amiable qualities which produce confidence and comfort, do they not make him indeed exclaim

> "Where'er I go, whatever lands I see,
> My soul untravelled still returns to thee!"

Farewel.

LETTER XV.

St. Petersburgh, January, 1806.

THE emperor has arrived from the army. And the guards, as well as the grand-duke Constantine's Hulan regiment, are expected ere long to march into St. Petersburgh. The peace between France and Austria is ratified. The earth has been sown with blood, and new kings are arising every day from the dragon's teeth. The continent, at present, seems plunged into a fearful sleep. Bonaparte is the only one awake in the desolated scene. His machinations and his arms have silenced the people who were once considered as the military oracles of Europe. Vienna has been humbled by his presence; and the Imperialists have mourned in sackcloth and ashes, their too ready credence of his belial tongue. The Louvre will now receive additional treasures; for neither the private nor public museums of Germany can escape the vigilant pillager of Europe. This is the third of the *Lord's anointed* whom he has driven from their capital; and who may be the next, which of us can pretend to say! Though, judging of the fate of nations by their determination and means of resistance, little fear is to be entertained for the independence either of England or of this country. The same *amor patriæ* is paramount here, which so surely guarantees the freedom of our native island. Usurpation is held in equal detestation, while so amiable a monarch as Alexander fills the imperial throne.

Having been presented to this interesting personage, I cannot but give you a sketch of his figure and manners. I know your eagerness to become acquainted with the great of all countries: I mean the truly great; the illustrious in talents, and the illustrious in virtue: they alone have ever been the great to you; and to them, while resembling them as a brother, have you not always bowed with the humility of a son! But to return to the Emperor.

He is mild in his demeanor, gentle in his motions, and particularly graceful in his address. The goodness of his heart shines forth in his eyes, and the sweetness of his temper ever

embellishes his lip with a smile. So great is his benevolence, that not a day passes without bringing forward some instance of his attention to the welfare and comfort of his people; and his lenity in punishing criminals is so forbearing, that in all cases the most tender mercy waits upon his justice. His figure is handsome and elegant, his air affable and engaging; and his countenance ever expresses the benignity of his mind. His height is about five feet eleven inches. He is fair with blue eyes; and his complexion, though not florid, is beaming with health, and most interestingly tinged with the hue of a military life.

On our first presentation, according to the etiquette of this court, the Emperor passed forward, only bowing to the strangers. But after that formal ceremony was once over, at every other levée he converses with all the dignified freedom which sits so gracefully upon persons of his rank; and more particularly captivates in him, from the intelligence and amiable interest of his manners.

The dowager Empress, who is of a Pallas form and mien, is a most admirable woman. I have before given you an idea of her numerous charities. She is exquisitely accomplished; and possesses a courtesy of address that is undescribable. To her fair hand I am indebted for a diamond, which, in devotion to her virtues, I shall ever wear next my heart.

Since the return of its invaluable monarch, St. Petersburgh has been a scene of continued gaiety. And as it is also the opening of the new year, a time of extraordinary festivity in Russia, there is no end to the *fêtes*, feasts, and rejoicings.

Amongst them all, I must not omit describing an evening which I lately passed at the Winter Palace. The entertainment given there was a public maquerade; where from the imperial family, down to the Russ tradesman, all ceremony was suspended. This immense winter residence (of which the Hermitage forms only a very small part) was thrown open: every saloon, gallery, and corridor blazed with chandeliers. The dome of the grand hall of Saint George shone like a crystal heaven. Indeed, in the luxury of light no country is so lavish as Russia; for even the meanest houses bear witness to the truth of this observation.

The crowd and heat of the masquerade was almost unbearable (fifteen hundred persons having received tickets of admission); and when involved in a vortex where mingled many of the *unpurified* natives, the more refined were unable to form an antidote to the effluvia. Otto of roses and the most costly perfumes, were breathed in vain through this motley and steaming group.

The nobility present, who underwent this Saturnalian festival, were full dressed in Venetian and other fancy habits. The lower orders were attired after their usual manner: but the most curious objects were the wives of the rich Russian merchants (whose national costume had in itself a masquerade effect), attended by their bearded husbands dressed in dark kaftans. As they strolled about the rooms, they appeared like companies of fantastic characters, habited as magicians, and overgrown fairies clad in "*glittering robes of shining green!*" Amongst the ornaments of these women, my eye was much pleased with one peculiar to their country: it is a coronet of the ducal form, composed entirely of pearls exquisitely arranged. Under this coronet the hair of the single women is bound smoothly back; that of the married ones wholly concealed. Great masses of fur, gold and silver fringe, finish their gala attire. It is only to carnival days and saints' festivals that they pay the tribute of so sumptuous an appearance; and then their mania for outvying a rival, often makes them forego the common comforts of existence.

At eight o'clock the masquerade was filled to suffocation; and about an hour afterwards the imperial family entered, creating a kind of current in the mob, which is elegantly termed a *Polonage*. This is a promenade in couples, with which all the maids of honour, gentlemen of the court, nobles, &c. fall in. Thus they pass through every chamber, to the gratification of the multitude, mingling without reserve amidst the lowest of their subjects. The ladies of the imperial family were all clothed in the ancient style of Muscovy; a habit covered with pearls, and by no means unbecoming. But to the beauty or majesty of their coëffure, my stubborn taste for simplicity refused to subscribe. The coëffure is a *thing* entirely formed of various coloured jewels, fixed on the head by means of a cap,

from which it rises like a pyramid nearly a yard in the air: large uncouth patterns of flowers are wrought into it, making an embroidery of precious stones. From the utmost pinnacle of this monstrous nondescript, hangs a huge square of brocaded silk, reaching to the bottom of the back. When you look at this last appendage, without knowing to what it is attached, the effect is ridiculous beyond conception.

After remaining more than two hours in the assembly, the imperial family withdrew into the Hermitage. This department of the palace being sacred to them and their party, became literally a heaven to retire to, from the bustle, heat, and offensive vapour of the purgatory we had left.

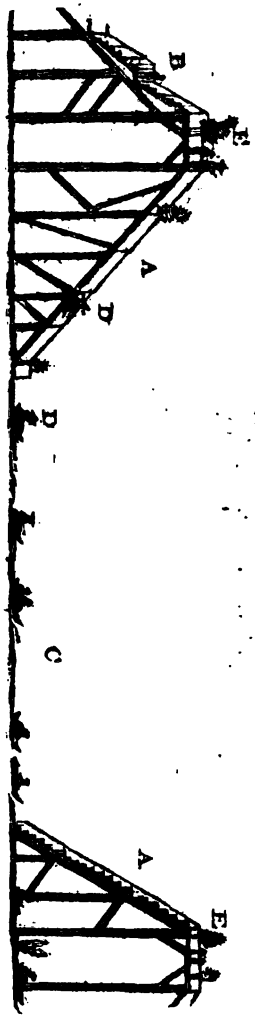
In some former letter I have described this celebrated place: at least the pictures which form its splendid hangings. Nothing can exceed the magnificence of its various decorations. Silver candelabra of gigantic size and classic shape, blazing above vases of Siberian marble, are ranged on all sides, amidst every luxurious improvement of couch or chair in French, Turkish, or Grecian taste. These elegant trifles are not too profusely lavished; for they all seem to have their use, and rather add to, than diminish the consequence of those nobler works of art which enrich the walls. Indeed the whole interior of this little palace is so complete, and arranged with such unity of design, that it would be injurious to its merits to attempt comparing it with St. Cloud. That boasted mansion, for the perfection of which every atom of French talent has been exerted, every touch of French taste laboured and repeated, proved at last—but a large *Magazin des Meubles!* Confused and vilely disposed, the infamous fashion of never admitting two chairs alike into one room, has rendered it the most disgustingly expensive, and vulgarly ostentatious display of *fine furniture* that ever yet pretended to the name of magnificence. St. Cloud is an upholsterer's shop, whence palaces may be fitted: the Hermitage is a palace ready fitted for the reception of kings.

And here was spread a court supper, that in splendor and taste well accorded with the graces of the imperial family which adorned the banquet. The theatre of the Hermitage, in

which operas, masquerades and balls are often given, during the winter residence of the emperor, was adapted for the occasion in a style exquisitely beautiful and novel. The artist who has the management of these fairy phantasies is an Italian called Gonzalo; and his genius had now imparted such charms to this little theatre as are far beyond my homely pen to describe.

In the first place, the pit was boarded level with the stage. On this platform were placed tables, in all the pride of an imperial banquet, richly lighted and royally spread for feasting. The festooned curtain common to theatres, was here made of gold tissue, forming resplendent draperies, glittering with fringes of cut glass. Immediately behind this façade rose drapery of the same magnificent materials in form of a Turkish tent; from the centre of which hung a lustre whose numberless crystal pendents produced a constellation of light. Over this fell a veil of spun glass, woven into transparent network like lace, through which played the prismatic colours with indescribable brilliancy; cords and tassels of glass in various festoons, crossed each other amongst the draperies; beneath which stood a circular bower of rose trees in full blow and fragrance. A range of arches (advanced some paces in front of the bower), were tastefully ornamented with arabesque devices; and their openings filled up with a film of spun glass *apparently* finer than cobweb; on which were painted in opaque colours, sylphic figures, which thus seemed floating in the air. Unseen lights were so ingeniously placed as to reflect from this glassy gauze, producing such an effect as the sun's rays on a light falling shower.

When the whole of this enchanted spot was illuminated, it might well have been mistaken for a diamond mine, destined for the banquet of genii. Nay, the charm was completed by the sound of music from a hidden instrument, which united in itself the characters of the organ and Eolian harp (I did not see it, but they say it will surprise me when I do). These soft, melodious breathings issued from the thicket of rose trees, and finished the magical effect of this *Arabian night* like scene. While "pleasure winged the festive hours," I almost fancied myself transported to one of the *fortunate islands* of the fabu-



A. A. the inclined planes of ice. B. the flight of steps in order to ascend. C. the flat between the opposite hills; D. people on sledges, impelled towards its base. E. E. fir-trees stuck on the top of the hills to give them a cheerful and pretty effect.

The bearded natives gather a plentiful harvest of kopecks during this carnival, as a few pieces of that money is their usual charge for transporting individuals down the icy fall. The mode is as follows. A sort of sledge, without projections of any kind, but in shape and flatness like a butcher's tray, is most fantastically and rudely ornamented with carving and colours, and placed on the summit of the hill. The native seats himself upon it, very far back, his legs extending in front perfectly straight. The person to be conveyed, places him or herself before him in a similar attitude, and both remaining steady, pass rapidly down the frozen torrent. The native behind guides their course with his hands, on the same principle as that of a vessel, touching the contrary side to that which they wish to go. To such nicety do they attain, that they steer round groups of upset persons, without the chance of their giving or receiving the smallest injury. Many go down in these sledges alone; and others on skates, both men and women, who fly forwards in a perfectly upright position. Steadiness seems the chief accomplishment in the Russian skater: and the velocity of his motion, the object of pleasure in the spectator. Here we nowhere see those graceful motions on the ice, that Mercurial sway of limbs in their volant sweep over its surface, which have been so much your friend's admiration while standing a wintry day by the Serpentine in Hyde Park. You would call the Russians stout skaters; but I fancy the utmost of your skill could not teach them elegance. Not that the generality of men in this country, who have fine forms, are radically incapable of adopting graceful attitudes; but the cumbersomeness of their dress, and the customary modes of this exercise have never included any thing more pleasing to the eye than the simple object of rapid motion. The sensation excited in the person who descends in the sledge, is at first extremely painful; but after a few times passing through the cutting air, it is exquisitely pleasurable. This seems strange, but it is so: as you shoot along, a sort of ethereal intoxication takes hold of the senses, that is absolutely delightful.

As I am on the river, I may as well continue my *cold* descriptions, by giving you an account of a ceremony which I

witnessed some weeks ago. It is one of the most celebrated in Russia, and is observed in that vast empire at every place on the same day. I mean the *benediction of the waters*.

The Greek church has two offices for the benediction of the waters. The first may be performed at any time, when there is a want of holy water for baptism or any other religious use. The second, the great sanctification, is instituted in memory of the immersion of Jesus Christ in the Jordan; and is of a very ancient date. It may be traced to the times of Saint Chrysostom; and is held in such great respect, that any water so consecrated is supposed to remain for years as fresh as when drawn from the spring; and when swallowed by sick persons, to cure them of their disease. Peter the Great, when he caused the patriarchal dignity to be laid aside in his dominions, abolished with it many useless and expensive solemnities. But this one of the waters was retained; on what principle I cannot pretend to say, so shall content myself with merely shewing to you its pageantry.

Being in the Winter Palace, close to the scene of action, I had every advantage for viewing what passed. It was the sixth of January, the day appointed for the ceremony. On the ice of the Neva was erected a kind of temple, made of wood, painted and gilt, surmounted with a gold cross, and in front embellished with pictures relating to the ministry of John the Baptist. The dome of this temporary building being supported by pillars only, through the vacant spaces the eye of curiosity may freely range. An inclosure of fir boughs twisted together, at some distance round the temple, keeps the mobility without, and the nobility within. This spot is carpeted with scarlet cloth, as is the temple, and the platform which reaches to the palace, whence the procession proceeds. The temple is decorated with altars, crosses, relics, holy books, and every sort of sacred utensil. And in the midst of the consecrated inclosure is a hole cut in the ice, which is called the Jordan.

After the liturgy is finished, the priests and archimandrites (the superiors of monasteries), and the bishops, apparelled in their richest habits, issue from the Winter Palace; and bearing lighted tapers, the censer, and religious banners, proceed to

the Jordan, singing their appropriate anthems. The imperial family and the court then follow; and while the service is performing, all the troops in the city are drawn up round the spot, with their standards waving, and the artillery planted ready to fire at the conclusion of the ceremony.

After several prayers for the sovereign and the people, the priest, blessing the water with his uplifted hands three times, utters this invocation.

"Be present, O merciful God, and by the coming of the Holy Ghost, sanctify this water! Endue it with the grace of redemption, the benediction of Jordan. Make it the fountain of incorruption, the gift of holiness, the water of absolution, powerful to heal bodily sickness, deadly to every evil spirit, inaccessible to every adverse power; and abounding with angelic virtue; that all who draw out and partake thereof, may receive it for the purification of their souls and bodies, for the sanctification of their houses, and for every thing good and profitable to them. For thou art our God, who by water and the Spirit didst renew our nature grown old in sin. Thou art our God, who didst overwhelm and drown sin by water in the time of Noah. Thou art our God, who didst lead the children of Israel through the sea by Moses, and so delivered them from the bondage of Pharaoh. Thou art our God, who didst divide the stony rock in the wilderness, that the waters gushed out to give drink to thy thirsty people. Thou art our God, who by fire and water, through the ministry of Elijah, didst deliver the Israelites from the errors of Baal! Do thou, O Lord, now sanctify this water with thy Holy Spirit! And grant unto all who touch it, and partake thereof, or are washed therewith, holiness, salvation, purification, and blessing!"

The priest then consecrates the water with the holy cross, immerging it thrice into the stream, and chanting the benediction. This done, he takes some of the water thus rendered of divine properties, up in a dish, and touching the clergy and others with it, gives the dismission. The guns of all the troops then fire, and the solemnity concludes.

The effect of the varied groups, the military, religious, and courtly habits, as well as the characteristic accompaniments of

adjacent objects, gave the whole a very splendid and interesting appearance. When all was over, we saw mothers hastening to dip their children in the opening made in the ice; firmly believing, while they did so, that they rendered them invulnerable to all the ills of this life, both spiritual and temporal.

Returning home along the river, I passed a couple of beautiful sledges drawn by reindeer from the Samoiede country, some hundred versts beyond Archangel. The animals were harnessed by the neck, and went extremely swift. They belonged to a nobleman of high rank; and were brought merely as objects of curiosity; the climate of St. Petersburgh being so much too mild for them, that they seldom outlive one season. Their appearance in the sledge was remarkably fine, harmonizing most picturesquely with the snows and ice of the surrounding view: and while I looked at them as they swept along in all the majesty of strength and grace of motion, I could not help regretting that their existence was so prematurely shortened. You know I never was a friend to the passion for novelty when it extends to animate creation, and because it is our fancy induces us to ravish poor birds and beasts from their native wilds, to languish and die in climates inimical to their natures.

This letter, from its divers subjects, is a very harlequin jacket; grave and gay; any thing, perhaps, but what it ought to be. However, as I wish you to share in all I see and hear, you must grant me some indulgence for throwing down my observations just as they occur. I do not pretend to be favoured with the *Pegasean* quill that was presented to you on entering the world: I never reached the wing of the immortal steed; but nevertheless, a few hairs I plucked from his streaming tail, and twisting them into a pencil, with a stroke of its paint, now convey to you the visible form* of the scene I have attempted to describe.

Having run you a race almost as long as my reindeer, I shall now bid you good rest! Adieu!

* This, with many other sketches taken in Russia, and hereafter referred to, was lost in crossing the Gulf of Bothnia.

LETTER XVI.

St. Petersburgh, February, 1806.

AND so you wonder, my dear friend, that I have not yet taken notice of the one subject in which I have always, until this instance, shown so particular an interest. You ask me, what has become of my attachment to the army, that I have not given you any idea of the state of its establishment in Russia! It is just where it was, the firstborn passion in my breast; but, waiting for little more and more information on the subject (which nothing but the return of part of the army from the frontiers could afford me), I have outstaid your patience; and so at present must content myself with quieting your demands by sending merely my first sketch of its appearance and uniforms. Much further I cannot yet describe; for, as I said before, the late absence of the military has deprived us, not only of reviews, but of even the usual ceremony of an imperial parade.

The guards are here, with several other regiments; and from my acquaintance with them, I shall be able to send you a few observations on this department of the Russian empire.

The troops which first strike the eye of a stranger on entering St. Petersburgh, are the Cossacs; and certainly more curious objects cannot be imagined. Their persons, air, and appointments, and the animals on which they are mounted, seem so totally at variance, that you can hardly suppose a reason for so unequal a union. The men are robust and fit for service: their horses appear completely the reverse: mean in shape, and slouching in motion, every limb speaks of languor, and every moment you expect to see them drop down dead under their heavy burthen: but so false are these shows, that there is not a more hardy animal existing; it will travel incalculable journeys, and remain exposed to the heat or cold, day and night, without manifesting any sense of inconvenience.

These little rugged beasts never, like our *war horses*, know the luxury of a snug stable and a well littered bed, nor ever enjoy the comfort of a currycomb or whisp of straw. Their

sustenance is of the most scanty sort; but, in spite of toil and rough fare, they endure all with unabated strength; and are thus, of all animals, the best fitted for a soldier's life. Indeed, when I consider their training, and also that of the Russian soldiers in general, I cannot but prefer the simplicity of their wants to the comparatively luxurious habits of our army. A man who accustoms himself to costly fare, may not be less willing than one of poorer appetites to brave all the privations of a campaign, or the famine of a siege; but he must be less able to bear them, and so be more likely to sink in the conflict. One of the first qualifications of a soldier is that of being personally hardy: and wherever we have found the most powerful and popular generals, we see that they accustom themselves to endure every privation which could possibly affect a military life. Gustavus Vasa, and Charles the Twelfth of Sweden, are eminent instances of this; and the great Suwarroff gave not a less meritorious example to the army of Russia.

But to return to the Cossacs. Though now formed into regular regiments, they receive no other pay than the usual allowance for cavalry. The origin of this brave race, who in so many wars have been amongst the best soldiers of the empire, was a restless band of fugitives from Astrakhan, and the provinces of Polish Russia, Podolia, and Volhynia. Having left their native soil, they wandered towards the banks of the Boristhenes, where they took possession of several small islands, subsisting themselves by ravages, piracies, and plunder. From this double mode of depredation they soon became formidable to the Turks on the Black Sea. Their maritime adventures, and enterprises on land, formed them into excellent seamen as well as soldiers; and their nearest neighbours regarded them with jealousy and dread.

Stephen Batori, king of Poland, aware of their growing consequence, had the address to attach them to his interests; and, to induce them to serve in his armies, gave them lands and many privileges in the Ukraine, guaranteed to them the right of being governed by their own chief, and put them in possession of the strong fort of Tretimiroff on the Boristhenes. The succeeding princes of Poland were not so prudent as

Batori; and, attempting to entirely subjugate their hardy allies, a sharp contention arose between them; and the Cossacs, overwhelmed by the numbers and discipline of their treacherous friends, emigrated in vast numbers to a tract of country on the banks of the Don and Volga. Others went to the borders of the Caspian Sea, and seizing the town of Azoph, established themselves in great strength. But the Poles continuing to harass them, they applied to the Muscovites for succour; and since then have been most firmly attached to the nation.

They are distinguished by the names of Donski and Ukraine Cossacs; and the Tzar Peter, finding them so valuable an acquisition, allowed them, unrestricted, their usual government, which is a sort of military democracy. Their chief is called the Hetman, and is elected in a general meeting of the heads of the people, leaving the confirmation of his dignity to the sovereign of Muscovy. The office is for life. Every town has its governor, also called a Hetman, who is chosen annually, and is accountable to the grand Hetman. The Tzar awarded to the Cossacs his protection in retaining to them the enjoyment of their ancient laws and privileges, without paying any tribute to him, provided they would always hold themselves in readiness to appear in arms at their own expense, whenever he should deem it necessary to require their services. I am told that their usual power is 16,000 men, which they can bring into the field any day that is demanded of them by the emperor.

Their riches consist in cattle and horses. Their habitations are clean, and their diet chiefly fish, flesh, and fruits, cooked in the plainest way. The men are very tall, well proportioned, and greatly differ in the character of their heads from those of their neighbours. They are hardy, brave, active, and lively; but, like most uncultivated nations, few of them have any idea of the refinements of honour. Their dialect is a mixture of Polish and Russ. When they first accepted the protection of Poland they were pagans; but they now profess the christian religion as it is established in Russia.

Their dress is military and useful; consisting of a close dark

diers to the amount of 5600 men: making a total of 109,650. Besides these there were forces on the frontiers and in garrison, calculated at 150,000 men; not including the Cossacs, Calmucs, and Tartars, in the service of Russia, amounting to an equal number.

The uniform of the infantry was commonly green with red facings: the cavalry wore blue returned with red; the artillery and bombardiers scarlet, with blue and black facings. The whole army was distinguished with white cockades. Every regiment, like our own, takes its name from the district in which it was raised. The grenadiers are the only exception, and they are called by the name of their commanders. The pay, in the time of the Tzar, was not very considerable; but, according to the period, perhaps fully adequate to the expenses of the soldier. To foreign officers he gave almost one third more than he paid to those of his own country. This of course was to induce them to serve him.

I by chance met with a little work on the subject (printed at Strawberry-Hill); it is scarce; and as probably you may have never seen it, I shall make an extract from it relative to the pay, &c. of the Russian soldier during the year 1710. It was a memorandum of sir Charles Whitworth's while ambassador at this court.

The whole expense for clothing and arming a foot soldier was twelve rubles. They were new equipped every two years; and a kopeck a day was stopped for that purpose out of their pay. The nobility were obliged to furnish horses for the cavalry, for which government allowed them seven rubles for each animal. Sir Charles Whitworth says, that eleven rubles per annum was the pay of a soldier, exclusive of his monthly allowances of corn, peas, bacon, &c. Another author shows that this sum is merely nominal, as more than half of it was deducted for the purchase of clothes, medicines, flints, arms, and a hundred etcetera. As far as relates to these regulations, little difference has taken place to this day; you may judge for yourself, as underneath I have set down the state of the pay in the time of Peter, and have added to it that of the army at the present period.

In 1710.	Yearly pay. *Rubles.*
Field-Marshal	10,000
Lieutenant-General	1,560
Major-General	1,170
Major-General (a foreigner)	1,950
Brigadier-General	1,040
Colonel	650
Lieutenant-Colonel	390
Major	325
Clerk of the regiment	91
Surgeon	130

A COMPANY.

	Yearly pay. *Rubles.*	
Captain	234	The colonels and lieutenant-colonels had all companies, and of course would receive allowances accordingly.
Lieutenant	130	
Ensign	104	
Quarter-Master	91	
3 Sergeants	15	
6 Corporals	13	
Clerk of the Company	13	
2 Drummers	11	
84 Private soldiers	11	

In 1806.	
Colonel	900
Lieutenant-Colonel	680
Major	500
Captain	415
Lieutenant	300
Ensign (or 2d Lieutenant)	240
Private of infantry	3 and 30 kopecks.
Private of Cavalry	4
Private of artillery	4 and 20 kopecks.

The evolutions of the army remained in the state Peter the First left them, until Peter the Third, smitten by the military fame of Frederick the Second, adopted the Prussian tactics as far as his short reign would allow. Amongst other transformations he changed the generally red facings of the infantry to colours varied according to the respective regiments. His successor the Great Catherine, had no whims in her alterations: she laid aside all the stiffnesses premeditated by her late husband, and studied the utility and ease of the soldier more than the smartness of his appearance. It was she who gave the commodious large trowsers which the Cossacs now wear. Her son Paul again embraced the Prussian passion, entirely altering the system introduced by her, and making all around him German to the most violent excess. Indeed, the martial law, dress, and parade attending every minute circumstance, civil and military, are too well known for me to descant on here. However, no fault can be found with the aspect of the present Russian soldier. His air is martial, and his general appearance admirable.

The heavy cavalry wear green uniforms, cut short in the Austrian fashion with various facings. Their helmets are very high, crested with an enormous quantity of bristly hair; and the effect is altogether more that of an antique casque, than of a modern invention. White pantaloons have superseded the trowsers; and so far from being on the *easy* plan, they gird the wearer so tightly round the waist that you cannot look on him without being reminded of a wasp. This custom is not handsome; and by no means friendly to health, as the *encirclement* comes up so high on the body as to subject the soldier to great inconveniencies; and, in the course of a little time, must produce the most serious consequences.

The infantry wear a similar coat with the cavalry; and have felt caps like our own, decorated with a feather formed of hair dyed black, green, or red. The sword and bayonet are girt round their loins; and a broad white belt, crossing their left shoulder, carries the cartouchbox. This latter appendage belongs to all the troops. White cloth pantaloons and boots complete their apparel.

The emperor Alexander being much attached to his army,

and delighting to mark the emulation with which the officers strive to outstrip each other in their profession, takes great pains with his guards: and I think I may venture to pronounce that they are as fine a body of men as any crowned head in Europe can boast. They are of immense stature, warlike in their air, and remarkable for steadiness in all their duties. Their dress is green, like the rest of the infantry; showing their preeminence by no other difference than their colossal height, much increased by a high horsehair feather in their cap. Their mustachios are nicely blacked and pinched; and their whiskers, which are enormous, almost meet across the chin; and being whitened with powder, impart a striking expression of ferocity to their countenances.

The life guards of his imperial majesty are the *chevalier-guards* and the *guard à cheval*. They are clothed in white with red capes and sleeves, and a huge highcrested helmet, the common cavalry belt with a long straight sword, and the stiff jackboot. The officers are generally tall, but so thin and pinched at the waist that it is painful to see them move; as the joining of their body to their hips seems held by so slender an adhesion, that one cannot but apprehend every succeeding motion may break it in twain.

One of the most superb regiments in the Russian service is that of the Hulans, commanded by the archduke Constantine. He is particularly fond of it; always wears the uniform, which is blue with red returns and gold; and exercises it according to the Austrian system. The hussars, I understand, are no inconsiderable rivals to the magnificence of this corps; but the dress of their officers I should think by much too rich: the most profusely decorated light dragoons we have in England, are plain in comparison. The custom of loading military uniforms with expensive and needless ornaments is certainly wearing out; and a happy circumstance it is, both for the convenience and purse of the officers; and much rejoiced will every true soldier be, when he sees the army in general more usefully and less gaudily appointed. Indeed, so great a friend am I to the simplicity which seems so consonant with the military profession that, even where splendor is most admissible, when I have

seen your full dress of the guards at St. James's, I have thought its absolutely overlaying with gold lace, more becoming a monarch's page than one of the guardians of his safety. The most soldierlike and serviceable dress I have met with in any country is that of the Cossacs, for it contains every thing (excepting more appropriate arms), which is requisite in cavalry.

I am not yet sufficiently intimate with my subject to give you a just opinion of what may be all the virtues of a Russian soldier. The officers are in general full of high military honour; and, if we admit obedience to be the first qualification in the private, and no attempt to argue the propriety of any order received, to be the second, then certainly the Russian soldiers possess those excellences in full perfection. Taken from a state of slavery, they have no idea of acting for themselves when any of their superiors are by; hence, they are as ready to receive all outward impressions as a piece of clay in the modeller's hands; and that the hands of their modellers are not very idle, they daily feel on their heads and shoulders enforced by the cane.

Though humbled, the spirit of this hardy race is not subdued. It shows its latent manly powers in the field against the enemy: for there is not a braver set of men anywhere than the Russian soldiers. The frequent wars between them and the Persians and Turks, who are such fierce combatants, gives them a wild ferocity in action, and accustoms them to the determination never to give way. This temper they carry into other countries, as the campaigns of Suwarroff and Bagration so gloriously testify.

The army is recruited by a tax on the nobility of so many slaves out of every hundred they possess. The number is regulated according to the exigencies of the state.

I have not been very profuse in my remarks on national character, because, I think I might as well decide on the general effect of a statue, by seeing only its leg or arm, as write confidently of the Russian manners, when I have penetrated no further than this city. Indeed, I know of no study so uncertain as that of individuals; and it is by a number of individuals that we judge of a people: and where we find it so

difficult to gain a true knowledge of our own characters, we ought not to consider the task so easy to comprehend that of others. Some persons have a happy facility in seizing the characteristic points of a nation: and none was more eminently gifted with this power than Peter the First. I will transcribe a specimen; and instead of receiving the poor pittance of my opinion on one country, you shall be enriched with the judgment of so great an emperor on several. It was his estimation of the foreigners whom he encouraged to come to his new capital.

"You may give to a Frenchman (says he) liberal pay: he never amasses money, and loves pleasure. The case nearly answers to the German; only he spends what he labours for in good living, not on the gay vanities of the Frenchman. To an Englishman more must be given: he will enjoy himself at any rate; should he even call in to his aid his own credit. A Dutchman rarely eats enough to pacify nature; his sole object is economy: less, consequently, will serve him. An Italian is by nature inoculated with parsimony: a trifle, therefore, will do for him: almost out of nothing he will contrive to save; making no mystery of it, but acknowledging that he serves from home with no other view than to amass money to enable him to return with affluence to the heaven of Europe, his own dear Italy."

I am now preparing to make a visit to Mosco, the ancient capital of this empire. There many of the oldest families of consequence reside; living in a state of lordly hospitality appropriate to their rank and highly honourable to their magnificence. From thence I shall send you more satisfactory accounts; being then enabled to speak more correctly on the native and unsophisticated manners of the Muscovite nation. Many hundred miles shall I travel before I again subscribe myself your faithful friend.

LETTER XVII.

Moscow, February, 1806.

THE Russian winter is now far advanced: and as the mode of travelling is so different from that of summer, and indeed from any thing practised in countries where the frost is less severe, I shall give you a view of our accommodations before we set out.

On February the twenty-second, *old style*, Mr. H—— of Northamptonshire and myself proposed for our mutual comfort that the trip should be made together. With passports properly registered, and an order to the posthouses to furnish us with horses to the number of seven, we began our movements. The expense of this licence is at the rate of a kopeck a verst for each animal, according to the number the traveller deems necessary to take him to the end of his journey. The receipts belong to government. To the furnisher of the horses at each stage, we afterwards pay two kopecks as his remuneration.

The vehicle we purchased for ourselves was a *Kabitka;* a well contrived and snug machine, not dear, costing only thirty five rubles, that is, five guineas British. Its form is simple, being nothing more than a large wooden cradle, fixed on a double keel or skate of the same material, strongly shod with iron. Our trunks were placed at the head and foot; and filling the intermediate space at the bottom with hay, mattrasses, pillows, and other soft accompaniments, we wrapped our persons in pelisses, furred boots, caps, &c. and laying ourselves prostrate, side by side, in the bed we had made, were ready to sally forth in as regular a northern array as any veteran of the Russian winter. Our domestics followed in a barouche, deprived of its wheels, the better to facilitate its union with the sledge; but, like many other ill suited matches, the connexion became so uneasy to both parties that a separation was constantly threatened; and a most troublesome companion we found these *two made one* in our journey.

Being apprised that there were no decent inns on the road, we provided all sorts of conveniencies for ourselves and *suite*. Indeed, we had received so terrible a description of the houses we were to stop at, while the horses were changing, that I feared from heat, smells, dirt, and vermin, that I should not be able to endure them a moment; and so took every precaution against entering them at all if it could be possible. These places were the dwellings of the postmasters, whose only article of nourishment for the wearied traveller is coffee or tea.

The mode of attaching the horses to this vehicle is different from that used on similar occasions in any other country that I have ever seen; they being harnessed (generally six in number) abreast, like the *chariots of old*. The traces are of ropes; and the driver sits on a box in front of the kabitka. The *steeds*, which thus imitate the fashion of the heroic ages, unfortunately in appearance are every thing that is wretched and mean: they are diminutive, with matted coats and clotted tails and manes. Indeed, their aspect is so pitiable to an English eye, that you expect to see them stretched on the snow, never to rise again, long before they have measured half a dozen versts. With such exquisite halting places in perspective, and promising animals to draw us towards them, after a series of inconvenient delays we at last, late in the day of the twenty-second, moved off.

We soon arrived at the barrier gate, and producing our credentials to the officer on guard, were allowed honourable passage; and again putting our cattle to their speed, pressed forward towards the next stage with a swiftness incredible. We saw that our horses were like those of the Cossacs, of bad appearance but radical worth; and reclining in our cradle, committed ourselves to their guidance with feelings of confidence and ease most luxuriously delightful.

We had not travelled long before we found ourselves on an extensive plain of snow, bounded by black forests of birch and thick fir. The road was excellent; and the rapidity of our carriage seemed to increase rather than diminish with the distance. Before we reached the first post, we passed many travellers *embowelled* in like manner with ourselves; and also saw several curious looking villages. As they all resemble each other in

architectural arrangement, by describing one, I shall give you a tolerably accurate idea of the whole of these rustic residences throughout the empire. Scarcely any difference is distinguishable amongst them all, unless it may be in the size or materials of the church, or in its being built with or without a steeple.

The houses are constructed of wood, the walls being compiled of long round beams, or rather trunks of trees, bereft of their limbs and bark, laid horizontally one on the other with nicety and neatness. Not a nail is used in this erection; the building being so contrived as to be taken down at pleasure, and reerected in a few hours on any other spot. I am told that at Mosco there is a *house market*, where you may purchase small villages *ready made:* villas also, and houses of every size and pattern, fill up this extraordinary magazine; so, that if any one happens to be burnt out in the morning, before night he may have a room at least erected at a cheap rate, to cover him.

Most of the villages consist of one street only, pretty wide, presenting to the eye a row of gable ends, resembling the ancient towns in Britain. In the wall, are windows of four panes of glass, with curious carved ornaments a-top; and on their shutters (which open outwards) a variety of flowers, stars, and strange devices are painted in the rudest taste, and often blended with gilding. The national admiration of painting and sculpture is everywhere manifested on the façades of the cottages. The latter is certainly the best executed; and in some of their wild carvings frequently may be discovered the germs of real talent. Every house has a gallery or ballustrading below, besides the roof projecting from the face of the building, to defend its inmates from the sun during summer, and the weather in the severer season. I understand that no habitations are cooler than these during the hot months, nor any warmer through the whole of the cold. A sort of double gate separates each from its neighbour, and leads into a large courtyard filled with sheds, old kabitkas, and other carriages of the country; besides an accumulation of dirt, rotten straw, jaded horses, pigs, and other nuisances; completing a museum of nastiness scarcely to be found in any other civilized spot on the globe.

I have made a sketch of one of these villages which will assist you in comprehending my description. At the posthouse you observe a pole, on which is suspended a straw wreath and four or five tassels. I must plead ignorance of this emblem; and on inquiring, I found the postmaster no wiser than myself.

Nothing interesting presenting itself, we travelled onwards, through towns and villages, and over a dreary country, rendered ten thousand times more so by the season. All around was a vast wintry flat: and frequently not a vestige of man or of cultivation was seen, not even a solitary tree, to break the boundless expanse of snow. Indeed, no idea can be formed of the immense plains we traversed, unless you imagine yourself at sea, far, far from the sight of land. The Arabian deserts cannot be more awful to the eye, than the appearance of this scene. Such is the general aspect of the country during the rigours of winter; with now and then an exception of a large forest skirting the horizon for a considerable length of way. At intervals, as you shoot along, you see openings amongst its lofty trees, from which emerge picturesque groups of natives and their one-horse sledges, whereon are placed the different articles of commerce, going to various parts of this empire. They travel in vast numbers, and from all quarters, seldom fewer than one hundred and fifty in a string, having a driver to every seventh horse. The effect of this cavalcade at a distance is very curious; and in a morning, as they advance towards you, the scene is as beautiful as striking. The sun then rising, throws his rays across the snow, transforming it to the sight into a surface of diamonds. From the cold of the night, every man and horse is encrusted with these frosty particles; and the beams falling on them too, seem to cover their rude faces and rugged habits with a tissue of the most dazzling brilliants. The manes of the horses, and the long beards of the men, from the quantity of congealed breath, have a particularly glittering effect.

Novgorod was the first place of consequence that lay upon the road. On entering from the St. Petersburgh side, a long, high range of brick wall presents itself; the ruined towers and battlements, some of which are very interesting, being quite of a different charactered fortification from that of any ancient

fortress I had ever before beheld. The gilded minarets of the holy buildings, whose heads proudly shone in the heavens, formed a contrast, full of reflection, to this poor mutilated military *cestus*. I never saw in any place, however wretched, such forlorn effects from time and devastation as met my eyes on entering the town: so neglected, so poverty stricken; houses falling into ruin, and whole streets, in some parts, one wide waste of desolation. Such is the present state of a city once the capital of the country; the residence of the earliest sovereigns of the empire; and a place so flourishing by grandeur and by commerce, as to give rise to the proverb: "God and the great city of Novgorod who can withstand?" The river Volkoff divides it, running into the lake Ilmen at a short distance from the town. This vast body of water was unfrozen in the centre when we crossed, owing to the extraordinary rapidity of the flood: and I am told that under the most severe frosts it seldom freezes. A very long bridge on boats, for the conveniency of removal on account of the ice, is thrown over the lake.

As this is one of the most ancient towns in Russia, (being the native place of the great Princess Olga, who assumed the empire in the year 945) and the chief city of its grand-princes for many a century, we can have no difficulty in crediting the traditional accounts of what was once its magnitude. At present, within seven versts from Novgorod, stands a monastery, behind which they say formerly extended the old walls; nay, the spot on which that church is built has been pointed out to me as having been the centre of the "Great City." I could not see any ruins on this quarter to bear witness to the testimony.

Whilst our horses were preparing, my fellow traveller and myself paid a short visit to the cathedral of Saint Sophia. It was built near nine hundred years ago, by Vladimir, prince of Novgorod! The exterior is a dull collection of gloomy arches, decorated with gothically painted legends of saints. Within, are relics, held in great veneration by the people; monuments of departed princes, bishops, &c.: and high amidst the dim funereal light of the circling roof, the remains of silken banners: military, I suppose, from their form and station.

We were shown a huge millstone, which is regarded with the most devout reverence on account of the wonders attached to its history. It is believed that St. Anthony used it as a raft in crossing the Levant, and then made it his vehicle to Novgorod; where the people, astonished at such a miracle, were drawn to listen to his mission, and immediately embraced the doctrine taught by so manifest a messenger from Heaven. It is said, that in commemoration of his having introduced the christian religion into this city, he founded the very monastery in which this precious relic now resides.

Neither my companion nor I being able to *swallow the millstone*, we took a civil leave of our expositors, and left the church. Returning to the posthouse, we found our carriages ready; and again placing ourselves within them, proceeded over many dreary tracks of snow till we reached Twer.

This town is the capital of a province of that name; and is built at the conflux of the Twertza and the Volga: the latter river is now celebrated for its fine fish; once upon a day it drew its fame from the warriors who encamped on its banks: but happy is the period when peace gives leisure for those pleasures to be noticed, which in times of war are passed over as the waves that flow along unseen or unregarded. The warrior's glory is an attractive light that we are all fond of grasping; but if it leads not to peace, and the honour of those for whom they fight, we are but troublers of the world, and rather deserve a halter than a laurel.

The city is much larger than that of Novgorod; and in ancient days was one of its proudest rivals. Yarastof the third, the brother of Alexander Nefsky, received this principality as his inheritance; and transmitted the succession to a long train of descendants. Twer is divided into the old and new town. The former, situated on the opposite side of the Volga, consists of wooden cottages, and has rather a miserable appearance. But the latter having been burnt down in the year 1763, Catherine the second no sooner heard of the calamity, than she ordered it to be reerected on one of her own healthy and beautiful plans. She was at the expense of rebuilding the governor's house, the bishop's palace, the courts of justice, the exchange,

and other public buildings; and to engage the inhabitants to follow her models for the new town, she gave each of them a a loan of three hundred pounds for twelve years without interest. The money advanced by her imperial majesty was sixty thousand pounds; and she afterwards remitted one third of the sum. The streets are broad, open, and long; and the houses being brick stuccoed, and of a good architecture, they produce a very handsome effect. The same beneficent empress founded a school here for the burghers' children; and an academy for the young nobility. There is also an ecclesiastical college. In short nothing that could be conducive to the comfort, improvement, and prosperity of her people was neglected by this august princess. If ever sovereign deserved to be considered as the fostering parent of a nation, it was Catherine the great. You may trace her name from one end of this vast empire to the other; not in ciphers written over doors and windows, but in acts of munificence and wisdom which fill us with the most unalloyed admiration. Who can bring to remembrance that Catherine in some cases felt too much like a woman, when in every public deed of her life (and they were unceasing), you see manifested the sage, the heroine, and the affectionate guardian of millions of people?

Twer is a place of considerable commerce, owing to its situation on the conflux of two such advantageous rivers. And perhaps on this account we found a very good inn, which was no trifling comfort; though we were detained, and imposed on too, by the clumsiness and roguery of the host. Our unlucky barouche, after a variety of disasters in its journey, here broke fairly down; and thus proved the folly of making use, in these regions, of any carriage that is not adapted to the roads and horses of the country. After much bungling we at length got the vehicle mounted on its skates; and I inquired of the landlord his demand for the share he had in the repairs; he coolly asked *thirty rubles!* So exorbitant a charge occasioned me to remonstrate: at this moment my servant came up (an honest Russ, who some time before had been made free); he inquired what was the matter. I told him the extortion of the man, and that I wanted to beat him down. "I'll beat him down!" cried

he, catching the poor wretch by the beard; and laying upon his shoulders, with all his might, an immense bludgeon large enough to be called a club. As the terrified host swung round at the arm's length of my doughty champion, the blows fell like hail upon his back, while he kept bawling out: "twenty, fifteen, ten, &c." till he reduced his demand to the more reasonable sum of two rubles. On this cry, like the last bidding at an auction, the appraiser was satisfied, and the hammer fell. The poor battered wretch was released; and bowing with a grateful air to his chastiser, turned to me. Almost killed with laughing at so extraordinary a sight, I paid him his rubles. I was no less amused at the stupid indifference with which the standers by regarded the whole transaction; and got into the kabitka to pursue our journey, debating with myself, whether the frequent drubbings these slaves endure, really reduces their flesh to the consistence of stockfish; or whether the friendly sheepskins on their backs do not blunt the force of blows, which otherwise threaten not only bruises but broken bones. The bow he made to my triumphant vălet entertained me as much as any thing; and as we drove off, he repeated his *obeisances* with as much respect as if we had given him a hundred ducats, instead of a few rubles and a drubbing into the bargain. What will you say to me for standing by to countenance such a scene? But in fact, my umpire took me so by surprise, and I was so convulsed with laughter at the oddity of the group they formed, and the whole was performed in so short a time, that I declare I had not power to stir from the spot or speak a word; and so for once allowed the ridiculous to get the better of my humanity.

We now hoped to proceed quietly to Mosco; but alas! we had not gone very far before the barouche sledge showed symptoms of disunion again; and at the village of Klin our servants had the extraordinary pleasure of another *summerset* in the *snow*. While our plague was refitting, I left the management to the hero who had so well acquitted himself during the last affair, and entered the posthouse. By way of amusing my almost exhausted patience, as the apartment was rather curious, I made a sketch of the scene within. These dwellings being all

alike, my drawing will present you with the image of their form and inhabitants; but my pen, reluctant to be idle in your service, insists upon bringing before your *mind's senses*, its dirt, effluvia, and varieties of wretchedness. As the poet recommends *pomp* to *take physic*, perhaps it may not be less salutary now and then to give the delicacy of British organs a similar regimen! So, without further apology, I shall, notwithstanding my "damnable faces, begin!"

One room is the habitation of all the inmates. Here they eat, sleep, and perform all the functions of life. One quarter of it is occupied by a large stove or peech, flat at the top; on which many of them take their nocturnal rest; and during the day loll over its baking warmth, for hours, by threes and fours together, in a huddle, not more decent than disgusting. Beneath, is an excavation like an oven, used for the double duty of cooking their victuals, and heating the dwelling to the desired temperature. The apartment I am describing, rendered insufferably stifling by the stove, the breaths, and other fumigations, contained the postmaster, his wife, his mother, his wife's mother, an infant, and two men, apparently attached to the post department, as they wore green uniforms. There were others besides, who being rather withdrawn in a dark corner, we could not distinctly observe.

When we entered, the top of the oven was occupied by the three women and child, almost all in a state of nature. The youngest was extremely pretty, and seemed, though a mother, not more than fifteen. This is nothing surprising; as the warmth of these stoves act upon the human constitution as hothouses do upon exotics. A bed with dirty curtains filled one corner of the room; a few benches and a table, completed the furniture. The walls were not quite so barren, being covered with uncouth prints and innumerable daubings. In one spot was placed a picture or effigy of our Saviour and the Virgin, decorated with silver plates, stamped most curiously. From the ceiling was suspended a lamp, which during certain holydays is kept continually burning. Having finished my sketch, we left this cyclopean den, not only to look into the state of our carriages but to breath a little fresh air, as its heat and stench

became so pestiferous that we felt ourselves compelled to make our escape, or resign ourselves to suffocation. As we opened the door, the steam issued with us like smoke from the crater of a volcano.

While we stood by the repairing barouche, a priest came forth from the house we had quitted. He was a young, healthy, and good looking man, with long and beautiful hair divided on his forehead, and flowing gracefully on each shoulder, in the style of Raphael's head. He addressed us in his native tongue, but finding us ignorant in that point, changed his eloquence to the Latin language; and now being understood, he poured forth with such vehemence and inconsistency that we soon discovered he had been paying his devotions to a certain heathen deity, from whom he had received a most *spirited* afflatus; so much so, that he seemed to forget both himself and the dignity of his profession. Indeed he pestered us so adhesively that we were glad to shake him off, even by darting back into the apartment of the postmaster. He followed us in, proceeding as most men do who *take an enemy into their mouth to steal away their senses;* and after a most tormenting half hour, he at last said something in his native tongue, unintelligible to us, but so level to the understanding of the rest, that the females made their escape as if a shot had fallen amongst them. Our host seemed extremely angry; and, I suppose, intimated to the ecclesiastic that he desired his absence; for he turned round with a sullen reluctance, and proceeding towards the door, cast his eye on the painted effigy of our Saviour and his Mother. He stopped suddenly, and with the greatest reverence crossed himself several times, and then left the place.

I cannot say the example of this pastor was very edifying to his flock, it being now one of their most sacred fasts in the Greek calendar, when it is infamous amongst the Russians not to abstain from all strong liquors. This man was a secular priest; and, I am told that many of the lower rank of that order are rather free in their modes of life. Not so with those of higher dignity: they are celebrated for qualifications quite the contrary; for purity of heart and sanctity of manners. I will evince my respect to them, by giving you the opinion of one who knew them well.

"The superior clergy at this time are men whose simplicity, candour, and primitive modesty, would have illustrated the first ages of christianity. Their way of living, from the nature of their order, being all monks, is very rigid. And as it precludes them from mixing with the world, it is not to be wondered at that few of them should have that easiness of address which a frequent intercourse with society only can give. But their manners are gentle as their life is austere. Biassed by early education, they are perhaps a little too partial to the ceremonies of their own church; but they are far from being bigoted, or thinking there can be no salvation out of the pale of their own communion. Their studies are almost totally directed to their profession, as no instance has yet been known of any of them excelling in the arts or sciences."

Not doubting but that you are as tired of the pastor of Klin as we were, I shall bid the subject adieu; and having once more reentered our skating cradles, say farewel, till I again salute you from this city, with the beauties and hospitalities of Mosco.

LETTER XVIII.

Mosco, March, 1806.

AFTER six days and nights of weary travel, we arrived at Mosco on the twenty-ninth of February: but the weather being foggy, so entirely enveloped the city as to conceal a view from us which, I am told, for magnificence is not exceeded in Europe.

On delivering our letters of introduction, we were welcomed with all the courtesies of friendship; and at the first salutation, were made to forget, by the true politeness of this generous people, that we were strangers. I have heard it said that hospitality is a mark of barbarism. On what this opinion is grounded I cannot guess: but certainly it had not its foundation at Mosco; for I never saw, in any part of the world, such general polish of manners as in this city. Their hospitality appears to me to arise from a confidence in the friend who gives the introduction that he will not recommend any person unworthy of their notice; not doubting this, their benevolence hesitates not to receive the introduced with kindness: and from their love of society, if he prove agreeable he soon finds himself on the most easy and pleasant terms with a large and elegant acquaintance. Hence, I am led to consider this disqualifying remark on hospitality, as one of those commonplaces which the ignorant adopt on the faith of others; and those others, if they be equally unreflecting, can only promulgate the like dogmas, as an excuse for some failing in themselves.

Fortunately for us, our arrival and the prince Bagration's was nearly at the same time. We received cards from the English club (an association only so in name, not three of our nation belonging to it) inviting us to a dinner which they gave to the prince in honour of his late gallant conduct with the armies.

The house appropriated to this entertainment was a palace which formerly had been the residence of prince Gorgorin.

Its suite of splendid saloons, and the great marble hall in which dinner was served, were fitted up with the most unsparing magnificence. At half past two o'clock the governor, general Becklachoff, and the prince Bagration entered. The latter was immediately surrounded by all in the room, eager to express their joy at his presence, and congratulations to their country in being yet blessed with the preservation of such a man.

He is below the middle stature; of a dark complexion, deeply tinged with the climates in which he has served. His eye is small, quick and penetrating. His nose, a very high aquiline; and his face perfectly Georgian (he being of that country), expresses the most charming affability and sweetness. His demeanor is in unison with his countenance, being demonstrative of a modesty as winning as it is admirable in so idolized a character. He was dressed in a uniform wholly of green, covered with the insignia of many orders, stars, and a red ribbon.

The dinner was conducted with the nicest decorum; and the healths of the emperor and the prince Bagration were drunk with the greatest enthusiasm. In fact, I never saw a society of Russians so animated; and more than once it reminded me of similar meetings in honour of our glorious friend and hero sir Sidney Smith. Indeed the sentiment was so much the same, and the idea of one great man so naturally suggested those of others, that several of the Russian nobility present asked me if it were not like the *fêtes* we dedicate to our heroes. I acknowledged the resemblance; but inwardly gave them the palm of general politeness; a grace in which this assembly far exceeded ours: I never in my life experienced so much attention as was there paid to us as strangers and Englishmen. Three quarters of an hour finished the repast; previous to which a band of singers from a regiment quartered in the city, sung an air in honour of the prince. The words, I here present to you in a prose translation.

Friendship unites us here. Joy captivates each heart! Truth herself declares, that he is the hero who sacrifices himself to the emperor and the empire, despising envy and malice, and who dedicates himself to justice.

Chorus.—Let us entwine him a crown of laurels, for he merits to wear it.

Unassisted by fortunate circumstances, he wrested honour from the arms of peril. He added not single rays to the glory of Russia, but surrounded it with a thousand beams. Hope dawned wherever his form appeared. Hosts failed to make him shrink; and with a few he overcame numbers.

Chorus.—Let us entwine him a crown of laurels, for he merits to wear it.

A hero's soul is satisfied with gratitude, all other recompense is foreign to his feelings. He despises luxury and pride, and all the vanities of the world. To serve mankind is his aim, and their happiness his reward. They who reap the renown of virtue, lose it not in the grave!

Chorus.—Let us entwine him a crown of laurels, for he merits to wear it.

Every regiment has its own vocal band. They sing in parts, accompanied by an instrument resembling a guitar, called a Ballalaika. The strains of this musical tribute to the prince were wild and piercing; something like the tones of the Eolian harp, when the wind is disturbed and gusty. He received the song and the plaudits with a grace which again brought our *Cœur de Lion* before me. The air over, part of the company withdrew to cards; and part (in which latter choice I united) preferred a saloon, where several vocal and instrumental military bands were stationed, still further to amuse the prince during the intervals of conversation. We had also the horn-music; which, as it is strange and curious, I will describe.

It was invented by a Prince Gallitzin, in the year 1762. This instrument consists of forty persons, whose life is spent in blowing one note. The sounds produced are precisely similar to those of an immense organ; with this difference, that each note seems to blend with its preceding and following one; a circumstance that causes a blunt sensation to the ear, and gives a monotony to the whole. However, the effect possesses much sublimity, when the *performers are unseen:* but when they are visible, it is impossible to silence reflections which jar

with their harmony. To see human nature *reduced to such a use*, calls up thoughts very inimical to admiration of strains so awakened. I inquired who the *instrument* belonged to? (by that word, both *pipes* and *men* are included!) and was told it had just been purchased by a nobleman, on the recent death of its former possessor.

Some of these individuals, thus destined to drag through a melancholy existence, play at different times on several pipes of various sizes which breathe the higher notes. But the base pipes have each their unchanging blower: they are extremely long, and are laid upon a machine or trussel, close to which the performer stands, and places his mouth to the smaller extremity of the pipe in a horizontal position. The shape is exactly that of a hearing trumpet: a screw is inserted near the bell of the tube, to give it a sharper or flatter tone, as may be required. The performers are in general thin and pale: and I have little doubt but that the quantity of air the instrument takes, and the practice necessary for perfection in execution, must subtract many years from the otherwise natural term of their lives.

The instrumental military bands which I have heard in this country, are very inferior to those of England or France: two essential things are wanting, good cymbals and large drums. The latter instruments are very defective in Russia; and the fifes fall far short of ours.

My introduction to prince Bagration, who is not only one of the first of military heroes, but in his character as a man, is an honour to human nature, brought me to a sight the most degrading to our species. What a difference at once before my eyes! a great warrior, on whom all eyes were fixed with admiration; and a set of poor mechanized wretches, reduced to the level of a child's whistle! Indeed, I was moved with the most distressing pity when I looked upon them. But this was not enough; I was to see the varieties of destiny yet more manifested, in the formation and fortunes of a race of rational beings called dwarfs. They are here the pages and the playthings of the great; and at almost all entertainments stand for

hours by their lord's chair, holding his snuff-box, or awaiting his commands.

There is scarcely a nobleman in this country who is not possessed of one or more of these frisks of nature; but in their selection, I cannot say that the *noblesse* display their gallantry, as they choose none but males. Indeed, to excuse them, I must confess, that amongst all the unappropriated dwarfs I have seen, I have never met with one female of that diminutive stature. I am told that these pigmy forms are very rare with women; and much to the honour of nature is the exception in their favour, as you will agree with me that the charms of the lovely sex are too valuable to be so sported. How do we pity one of these tiny men, cut off from the respectabilities of his manhood by the accident of stunted growth! What should we not then feel, to see a fairy form of the other sex shut out, by a similar misfortune, from all those varieties of happiness which belong to the tender associations of a wife and a mother? I confess my compassion would be rather painful; and am very glad that as yet I have seen the calamity entailed on the harder sex only, who are best able to contend with its cheerlessness and discomforts.

These little beings are generally the gayest drest persons in the service of their lord; and are attired in a uniform or livery of very costly materials. In the presence of their owner their usual station is at his elbow, in the character of a page; and during his absence, they are then responsible for the cleanliness and combed locks of their companions of the canine species.

Besides these lilliputians, many of the nobility keep a fool or two, like the *motleys* of our court in the days of Elizabeth; but like in name alone; for their wit, if they ever had any, is swallowed up by indolence. Savoury sauce and rich repasts swell their bodies to the most disgusting size; and lying about in the corners of some splendid saloon, they sleep profoundly, till awakened by the command of their lord to amuse the company. Shaking their enormous bulk they rise from their trance, and supporting their unwieldy trunks against the wall, drawl out their heavy nonsense, with as much grace as the motions of a sloth in the hands of a reptile fancier. One glance was

sufficient for me of these imbruted creatures; and, with something like pleasure, I turned from them to the less humiliating view of human nature in the dwarf.

The race of these unfortunates, is very diminutive in Russia, and very numerous. They are generally well shaped, and their hands and feet particularly graceful. Indeed, in the proportion of their figures, we should nowhere discover them to be flaws in the economy of nature, were it not for a peculiarity of feature, and the size of the head, which is commonly exceedingly enlarged. Take them on the whole, they are such compact, and even pretty little beings, that no idea can be formed of them from the clumsy deformed dwarfs which are exhibited at our fairs in England. I cannot say that we need envy Russia this part of her offspring: it is very curious to observe how nearly they resemble each other; their features are all so alike that you might easily imagine that one pair had spread their progeny over the whole country.

The dwarf of the governor-general of Mosco is about forty years of age, has a good tempered countenance; but his features and expression have an appearance to the eye as if he washed his face with alum water. I know not whether you can understand the effect that I mean. It is a sort of wizened, sharp look; inconceivable, I believe, unless you saw it. However, this crudeness does not extend to his disposition; his master assured me that he is cheerful, docile, and of a remarkably gentle temper. His height is forty-two inches. The next of his race that excited my attention, was one who measured forty inches and a quarter; he was twenty-five years of age, gay and sensible. He was the property of a naval officer. Count Alexey Orloff has one or two, much more juvenile, who are several inches shorter than the above. All, however, that I have yet seen are inferior in beauty and delicacy of proportion to the little Polish count we visited last spring in London. His head was hardly too large; and the sprightly ease of his finely turned lilliputian limbs was remarkably elegant. His conversation, you remember, surprised us both; for it evinced, that the diminutiveness of his body had not crampt the growth of his mind. We thought him a very interesting as well as odd little personage. His Russian

brethren are known to live to a great age. One (a female!) died very lately at St. Petersburgh, who had been a favourite with Peter the Great.

During the reign of that monarch, his sister Natalia collected all the dwarfs from around the capital, in order to celebrate the marriage of two; and the rite was solemnized with much folly and pomp. The number of the assembly amounted to ninety-three, all displayed in open carriages, adapted to their size, and drawn by the smallest horses that could be found. Many were brought from Shetland for the purpose. A magnificent entertainment and ball were given at court; and, to complete the absurdity, the princess, attended by the nobility, conducted the little pair to a state bed. Whether the union produced any *hopes* and *anxieties* to bless or plague the pigmy couple, is not recorded. And I believe this instance is the only one known, of a marriage between these hints of men and women.

Giants are also in request here: but they are not very numerous; and in stature fall far short of those which occasionally visit England from her sister island.

Having run you through such a legend of princely banquets, fairy revels, &c. &c. I shall leave you to your repose; either to dream of the brave prince Arthur and the elfin court, or to people your slumbers with the more terrific *fee-fa-fums* of many an enchanted castle. I assure you, the sight of a couple of these giants standing within the superb hall of a Russian nobleman, and the oddly caparisoned dwarfs, ushering you to the presence of their lord, would not a little strike you with its resemblance to a scene in romance. Adieu! ever in truth, your faithful friend.

LETTER XIX.

Mosco, April, 1806.

MOSCO is luxuriantly situated on an extent of country rather irregular, having in its spacious champaign a few rising grounds. Of all cities I ever beheld it is the most curious and un-European. On viewing it from an eminence you see a vast plain, as far as the eye can reach, covered with houses, even to the very horizon; where the lofty towers of gorgeous palaces, and the glittering steeples of churches, sparkle in the sky.

The city is built on the banks of two rivers, the Moskva (whence it takes its name), and the Yausa. Mosco was anciently divided into five districts; and as they in part yet retain their distinctions, you will have a clearer idea of this colossal town by having a description of these partitions. They lie one within the other. The interior circle is called the Kremlin, a Tartarian word for *the fortress*. The Kitaigorod, or Tartar town, is the second circle. The Biel-gorod called so (the white town) from a wall of that hue which surrounds it, is the third. The fourth circle is named Zemlenoi-gorod from its earthen rampart. The slobodes, or suburbs, inclose all these, and form the extremest boundary of Mosco.

The Kremlin stands in the centre of the city on an elevated bank of the Moskva. Within its walls stands the ancient palace of the tzars; rendered particularly interesting from the circumstance of its having been the residence of princes, whose names need only be mentioned to command the homage of every heart loyal to true kingly virtue. Mikhaila Romanoff, Alexey Mikhailovitch, Feodor, and the Great Peter, once inhabited these towers; and still sanctify them by their memories. The appearance of the palace is venerable; but it contains nothing of any consequence to see.

The cathedrals around the palace, which I understand are five in number, besides convents, parish churches, and colleges, give it rather a monastic solemnity. These are all richly endowed, and ornamented in the most costly manner. In one of

the churches lie the remains of the prince Demetrius who was so cruelly murdered, and is now regarded as a saint. Along with his relics repose those of several grand-princes and tzars. Their tombs are of stone, covered with palls of scarlet velvet superbly embroidered. The cathedral dedicated to the *Ascension*, possesses a perfect treasury of religious consecrations; and it is distinguished above the rest, in being the place where all the emperors of Russia are crowned. Not far from the cathedral is the synodal palace, where formerly the patriarchs dwelt, and which now contains an invaluable library. Near to that is the senate house, a magnificent building erected by Catherine the Second. And also the arsenal, a strong compact edifice. The Kremlin is parted from the Tartar town by a brick wall whitened, very high, and embattled in the eastern manner. My sketch of the city and this fortress will show you the form of the fortification. At various distances are towers, square and round, with spiral minarets, covered with scaly tiles like the skin of fish, painted green, yellow, and crimson, surmounted with a gilded ball and fane. It is curious to observe the similarity between this turreted bulwark and the well known Chinese wall, so well pourtrayed in lord Macartney's account of his embassy to China. The resemblance is so close, that we might think the same engineer had exerted his abilities in both countries.

Before I left the precincts of this interesting place, I ascended the tower of the church of Ivan the Great, which commands a view of the whole surrounding plain. Although the monotonous paleness of winter then shrouded its bosom, yet the *coup-d'œil* was transcendently magnificent. The sun shone with unattempered splendor through an atmosphere, whose clearness cannot be conceived in England; the variegated colours on the tops of innumerable buildings; the sparkling particles of snow on the earth and palaces; the fanes and crescents of the churches flashing their blazing gold; and, added to all, the busy world beneath, passing and repassing in their superb dresses and decorated sledges, presented such a scene of beauty and grandeur, that I should have thought myself repaid for

my disagreeable journey, had I even been obliged to return to St. Petersburgh immediately, in beholding so glorious a view.

The Kitai-gorod, the second division, is built round the Kremlin. Some, by that term, mean to call it the Tartar city; and others, the Chinese town. I have not acquired Russ enough to tell you whether the word Kitai equally applies to China and to Tartary: but that both nations have a pretence to naming it, we all know; the Tartars by their conquests; and the Chinese from the great commerce they once held with Mosco. This district, by way of eminence, is usually called *Gorod, the City;* and is surrounded with a wall and other fortifications. From the number of its shops and warehouses, and the Asiatic apparel of the buyers and sellers, it reminded me of what I had read of Bagdat in the time of the Caliphs, when the chief merchants of the east used to assemble in its populous streets. The number of shops and warehouses which compose this mart, are nearly six thousand.

There are some colleges in this city, and many private residences, amongst the most spacious of which is the house of Count Tcheremetieff. Its churches are mostly on the plan of those of St. Petersburgh, of which, I believe, I formerly gave you a sketch. Some in this district are of the ancient architecture; and others, built in more modern taste, are grotesque imitations of Greek and Roman temples: and yet, notwithstanding their defects, they form not an unpleasing variety with the Asiatic structures around. The effect of the latter edifices is picturesque and splendid. The great mass or body of the church is square, ornamented with small semicircular arches and columns, similar to our Saxon architecture. This building is surmounted by five minarets, one at each end, and a larger in the middle, shaped like an inverted balloon. They are all magnificently covered with ducat gold. A high gilt cross rises from the centre, beneath which is a crescent, a mark of triumph over Mahometanism both religious and military. When the Tartars, to whom Muscovy was subject two centuries, profaned any of the churches with their worship, they fixed the crescent, the badge of their prophet, upon its pinnacle. On

Mosco being regained to the empire by the grand-prince Ivan Basilovitch, he did not tear down the crescent, but planted the cross above it as a memorial of his victory. Not many paces from the main body of the church stands a narrow and higher tower of a different form from the minarets, being pyramidical. This contains the bells; and they are sounded by pulling their tongues against their sides: hence it is not difficult to toll those of the most enormous size. These machines are at work the greater part of the day; but very lucky it is both for the steeples and the town that they are not struck in the English fashion: half the belfries would have been down by this time, and all the people in the city driven deaf. Imagine the bells of a thousand churches (with five at least in each), clanging all at once, without harmony or variety; for they never ring in peals! The noise, in quality, is as bad as marrow bones and cleavers; and in quantity, more uproarious than any thing I can conceive since *Big Tom* at Oxford bereft the university of their hearing, and broke all the windows in the town.

Over the grand entrance of the church, is usually painted the legend of the Saint to whom it is dedicated. The inside is embellished in a similar taste, with gothic ornaments, and pictures imitated from Albert Durer, in a style not likely to rescue the fame of the Russian artists. The most remarkable church in Mosco for these internal decorations, is within this circle. It was the production of an Italian architect, brought from Italy by the tyrant Ivan Basilovitch on purpose to build him a church. On his arrival, the monarch gave him orders to erect an edifice that should be unequalled in taste and splendor throughout the world. Ivan was obeyed. The fabric was finished: and all Mosco crowded to express their admiration of its perfections. The poor artist's head could not bear such a whirlwind of adulation, and being complimented by a lord of the court on having produced a proof of his skill that never could be equalled, his intoxicated vanity dictated this unfortunate reply;

"It is nothing to one I could yet build!"

This declaration reached the ears of the tzar. The Italian was summoned; and the tyrant, repeating what he had heard added, "I shall put it out of your power to make any other

spring appears. In one day the Moskva became liquid, and no trace of winter remained on its waters, except where floating masses of ice, and the fragments of dismantled cottages rolling down its current, reminded you of the yet recent devastations of its departing wrath. The disunited snows from the higher lands usually come down into the lower in such quantity and with such violence, that cattle, men, and often whole villages are swept away. The rivers receive the dreadful deposit: and thus, on the banks of the Moskva, at the moment when spring promises every vernal joy, you behold the wrecks of devastation, the memorials of a mischief and misery incalculable.

A great part of the city lying very low, was for several days under water; but now all is cleared, and the trees are ready to bloom. It is hardly eight days since the thaw began, and there is scarcely a particle of snow to be found. What a fortnight ago was a dreary plain of ice, is now robed in verdure, and animated with budding trees and shrubs. The whole aspect of the city is so changed, that no one who did not witness the moment of alteration could believe it to be the same place. Mosco in summer and Mosco in winter has as much resemblance, as a butterfly to its chrysalis. At present it is like a world of palaces collected together: and really the idea given of it by Joseph the Second of Austria, who paid it a visit, is a better picture than I can draw.

"Here, (said he) have all the chief lords of the empire set themselves down, surrounded each by his village, his church, and his vassals."

The description is just; for it is not a city of houses in mere rank and file of streets, but rather a collection of mansions, each embosomed amidst its own lawns, gardens, pleasure grounds, and the dwellings of its necessary slaves. Some of the most ancient princes of the empire have very splendid palaces in Mosco, ornamented with basso relievo, gilding, and every Asiatic decoration. Indeed this is a favourite residence with almost all the Russian nobility who have not employments at court or in the government. And from the great influx of inhabitants, you see many of their fine houses yet unfinished without, while the inside boasts every splendor which taste can

present, and every hospitality in the power of kindness to offer. No Englishman can speak too sensibly of the attentions which the Moscovite nobility pay to the individuals of his nation. It is even more gracious than the most refined courtesy; possessing all its graces, it carries to your heart the more delightful conviction of an animated friendship.

Owing to the peculiar circumstances of the inhabitants of this town, pleasure is ever the order of the day: it holds a continual carnival, where balls, private theatres, masquerades, and assemblies of all sorts, for ever vary the scene. The grounds around the mansions of the nobility afford romantic and charming morning walks. But their favourite amusement, is what they call the *promenade*. It consists of all the carriages in the city, perhaps to the number of seven thousand, trailing after each other in regal procession, through fixed parts of the town and its environs. The insides of these vehicles are filled with all the beauty and splendor of Mosco: and in my life I never beheld so many lovely women at one time.

The superiority of this metropolis over that of St. Petersburgh, in the general beauty of the females, is beyond comparison. Perhaps this may be accounted for, from the intermarriages of the noble families with those of countries celebrated for symmetry of features and graceful forms: namely, Circassia, Georgia, and Poland. The young ladies dress in rather the Parisian mode, but much improved by their own native taste. Their evening attire is in a more beautiful style than that of any other country: but in the morning dress, the fair of our own country have the advantage.

Before I came into this country, I was led to believe that I should find the morals on a par with France. To me it seems totally the reverse. I never saw married people more happy, or apparently more affectionate towards each other: I never, in any country, met with young women more amiable and virtuous. Every country has its *mauvais sujets!* And anciently, as an unlimited license to pleasure was given here, and exampled by those high in influence, it might be supposed that the seeds of libertinism, once sown in a nation, could never be eradicated; but it grew so rank during its short season, that I believe

all is exhausted, and that the last generation carried with them into the other world not only the fruits but the roots of their cultivation. In short, it appears from what I have hitherto been able to judge, that for a city, whose sole object is pleasure, Mosco possesses less of what is called fashionable vice, than may be found in countries where more seeming austerity is practised.

The *promenade* I have just mentioned, or more properly speaking the *cavalcade*, generally begins at the termination of the six weeks' fast. Many do indeed religiously abstain from food, in a manner that produces very alarming effects. After the sparest diet, with a weakened system, when the fast expires, they return to their usual full tables with an avidity which, unchecked, lays the foundation for numerous disorders. The female sex, particularly, are sufferers, who throwing themselves from a cloistered regimen and retirement immediately into repletion, and the stream of these equipages; thinly clad, and staying out late with open windows amid the damps of the evaporating earth, catch such colds as either end their days or embitter their lives. Medical men tell me that at this *witching time* of the year, there is more sickness, death, and misery, than at any other period in their practice.

Were such a concourse of carriages to assemble in our island, as here meet on the banks of the Moskva, fractured poles, broken sides, and maimed coachmen, footmen, &c. would be the certain consequences; but a most admirable police is instituted both here and at St. Petersburgh, to prevent all confusion and disaster. This authority is invested in a detachment of soldiers, who having an imperious command over the procession, not only add to its magnificence but insure its safety.

Having escaped from this blaze of beauty without catching fire, and from the steaming earth without catching an ague, I call on you to congratulate on such a double miracle, your very affectionate friend.

LETTER XX.

Mosco, May, 1806.

THE first week in the vernal month of May! At this gay season, when pleasure woos me in as many shapes as ever Armida assumed to charm away the wits of the doughty Rinaldo, I cut my way through all her wiles; if not by a hero's sword, at least with a friend's penknife: and having pointed my quill, place myself firmly behind the shield of a sheet of paper, determined to fill it with a thousand of the enchantress's spent darts, before she draws me away from half an hour's converse with you!

You will not marvel at my *heroics*, when I tell you that I have just escaped from the very spell-bound wood of the fair magician! But I will relate all in order: and beginning with the usual style of longwinded story letters, *you must know* that the first of May is the brightest day in the Russian calendar of festivities. A wood, some versts from Mosco, is the spot dedicated to this annual enjoyment. The trees are already clothed with leaves, and the groves and bowers into which the sylvan scene is divided, are blooming with flowers, and every decoration that Pleasure, and her handmaid Taste, can devise. To this spot all steps are directed: and once more the long procession of carriages sets forth. By the way, I must check my reins a moment, to tell you how your remark "that good rulers ought to turn even the pleasures of the people to the advantage of the state," has been honoured *à priori* in Russia. Peter the Great instituted these cavalcades to make a part in all public festivities, that the building of carriages, and other manufactures useful in such shows, might be encouraged by more than an ordinary consumption. His plan took the desired effect, for the equipages are splendid to the utmost of their owner's stretch of fancy and purse: at this time the nobles try to outvie each other both in carriages and cattle. The caparisons are unusually gorgeous; and the result is remarkably fine, as they never drive fewer than four horses of the most admirable beauty. The servants are habited in dresses covered with

gold and other costly materials; and the occupiers of the carriages sparkle in all their orders: the men according to their rank, and the ladies adorned with every charm of nature and taste.

The procession formed a string of several miles in length, taking its course through avenues of lofty fir-trees, broken by a variety of romantic openings, amid which were seen the joyous groups of rugged natives and their gaudily dressed wives. At the appointed vernal spot, amongst the natural bowers of the wood, were planted marquées, belonging to the different nobility, filled with every species of elegant refreshment, and all sorts of amusements which could add to the exhilaration of the scene. This gay day ended with a *fête champêtre* given by the illustrious nephew of Suwarroff. It was the best fancied entertainment of the sort I ever saw; and so pleasant, that I hardly thought I had been there an hour, when the blaze of innumerable fireworks announced it to be midnight. Dancing and a splendid supper finished the festival.

The day following happening to be the anniversary of the birthday of the young Countess Orloff (the daughter of Count Alexey Orloff, the victor at Chesma, so well known in the reign of Catherine II.), she became the lady of that day's revels. She is amiable and accomplished, and in every respect reflects honour upon her rank and fortune.

I obeyed her summons, about two o'clock in the day; and found the superb mansion of her father already filled with the most distinguished nobility in Mosco. Stars blazed in all directions, ribbons crossed the eye at every turn; and uniforms of various colours, enriched with gold and silver, gave a magnificence to the whole not to be described. The ladies were arrayed in all their diamonds, pearls, and beauty, both real and artificial, and congratulated the young heiress most warmly on her birthday.

A sumptuous dinner, or banquet, spread with the luxury of an imperial repast was next in rotation. Music, vocal and instrumental, resounded from all sides: and when the health of the lady was drunk, a flourish of kettle drums and trumpets rent the air, and peals of ordnance (to those who saw them not)

reduced by their thunder the roar of festivity to the murmuring of distant merrymaking.

I happened to be gone into an adjoining room at the moment of one of these explosions, and most unluckily for their future effect on my senses, got a *peep behind the scenes*. I found that these repeated seeming discharges of cannon were produced by an accumulation of cows' bladders distended with wind, and rapidly laid in succession on large blocks of wood, where, with the velocity of a steam engine, they were burst at once by the action of a ponderous mould or mallet. A friend of mine stood near me, and observed with a smile, that we were now let into the theatrical secret of *flourishes of drums and trumpets*, and *the reports of sundry pieces of ordnance!*

Indeed, I believe my good lord Hamlet, that even thine own Shakspeare will not be able to check my mirth, should I again hear the regicide king drinking the health with

> "..... Give me the cup!
> "And let the kettle to the trumpet speak,
> "The trumpet to the cannonier without,
> "The *cannons to the heavens!*"

For the life of me I shall not be able to forget the cows' bladders, and so with the "ruined feelings" of poor Tilburina, in a burst of laughter must add my peals to those of the ordnance.

Not doubting but that you admire the ingenuity of the invention, I must account to you for its having been necessary. When I first saw it, I was ignorant that it might not have been a particular fancy of the count Orloff's; but, on inquiry, I found that during the reign of the whimsical Paul, an order was issued that no cannon should ever be fired in the empire but on imperial occasions. This ukase has never been repealed; and as the higher order of nobility had always, until that period, the privilege of discharging guns on their great days, they determined not to give up the martial sound, and therefore elected the cows' bladders in their place.

About five o'clock in the afternoon this *firmament of stars* made a transit to a race course two versts from the house. It

was arranged in imitation of ours; and the horses started in a similar style, excepting the appearance of the riders, who neither in neatness nor activity equalled the English jockey. It seemed amusing to the Russians, but to me it was very dull; there being neither spirit in the contest nor sport in the race. The cattle were British, as his excellency's stud is well chosen and extensive.

The evening terminated with a superb ball, in which the countess, as usual, displayed her urbanity and accomplishments. In fact, the day's entertainments were altogether worthy of the charming object of their celebration. I will not tantalize you, who are such an admirer of *harmony and grace, and gentlest beauty*, with the naming of any of those transcendent fair who were present! And yet why should I not? You are no churl of loveliness, no eastern despot, that will not permit another eye to rest upon the charms of your adoration; so, I will be equally liberal, and shall even tell you that many were the beauteous faces on which my sight banqueted on the sweet countess's birthnight. One, two, three lovely creatures, who might have rivalled the shepherd of Ida's contending goddesses, were present amidst nymphs almost as fair: but there yet was a planet brighter than even Venus to me; and her name you know, so I need not repeat it here. She was my guiding star through all the mazes of this happy festival; and as I walked or sat by her side, I saw in her all the fascinations of Russia, France, and Italy, blended with the interesting modesty of my dear native England.

With so sweet a partner in my hand I must speak a little of the dance here most in fashion: it is called a *country dance;* but I cannot say that it resembles ours either in figure, music, or sociability. We preferred conversation: and surely the conversation of an intelligent and amiable woman is the most delightful pleasure in nature! Old folks say that the young can never meet without love or matrimony coming on the carpet: so you will not be surprised that in my converse with so many youthful beauties, I should get a little into their secrets.

They tell me that during the single state of the Russian ladies (which I may call their childhood, they generally marry so

early), they are held by their parents in the strictest subjection; and in the regal style, are disposed of in marriage according to the will of the ruling powers. From that moment they are free. The parental shackles are thrown off, and they enjoy their liberty in the full plenitude of gaiety and innocence. Their husbands do not control them with any jealous fears. Ignorant of vice, these charming women may be as lively and as happy as they will. There is a frankness, and even affection, in their manners to their male friends and acquaintance which is particularly attractive; and causes you to feel as if you were living in the patriarchal days, and in the company of half a hundred lovely and endearing sisters.

One custom, however, I must put in my protest against: the common and public use to which the delicate and heavenly seal of friendship and love is diurnally appropriated! It is not sufficient that the fair sex salute each other, or touch your cheek; but no bearded boor meets his fellow, but forty smacks are heard, as though each were sucking cyder through a vent-peg. Every man, young, old, lame, blind, or ever so disgusting, when he kisses the hand of any woman, let her delicacy be ever so nice, or her rank exalted, she must return the salute on his cheek. This is done at every interview, although little intimacy may exist between the parties. When a lady would only courtesy a welcome in England, she must kiss it here; a custom which (though we are not ungrateful in its observance) I believe there is not a John Bull of us all that would not feel a little awkward in seeing either his wife, sister, or daughter, do honour with such liberal greetings to his guests. This strange wantoning with the sweetest pledge of tenderness, is here scattered yet more widely immediately after the expiration of the six weeks' fast. The ceremony of giving eggs then commences; and whoever presents one, let him be of ever so low an order, to a lady of whatever high rank, on saying the words *Christos vos Christ*, must take a kiss from the lady and exchange eggs with her.

The night for the celebration of this custom, being the anniversary of the resurrection of our Lord, a grand ceremony is performed at midnight, in the cathedral of the Kremlin, which is attended by vast multitudes. A picture of our Saviour, which

had been previously buried three days before, is raised with great solemnity; and then, as if directed by a stroke of electricity, the congregation all kiss each other without discrimination, and with much riot, bawling the above words. I was not an eyewitness of the scene, being ill; but my friend H——, who beheld and experienced the labial contaction, first from the lips of a blooming damsel, and next from the whiskers of a grisly boor, described it to me, with what *delightful remembrances* you can easily conceive.

Thus far, you may understand what is kissing religiously. But so frequently is the rite administered, that had Coriolanus travelled amongst the Russians instead of the Volcii, he must have knocked down half the empire before he would have been allowed to preserve the *virgin kiss* he carried back to his Virgilia. Kissing being a sort of system in this country, is conducted in due order, and arranged in classes.

First, the kiss religious. It stands highest in degree, and is of widest privilege, being used only at sacred periods; but during the holy seasons, under its passport, the veriest clown may find his way to the cheek of the loveliest or most illustrious woman in the empire. In fact it is an absolute *passe partout*. The second is in my mind the sweetest, and it is the rarest; but it has many a counterfeit, for its soft touch unites in one moment lips, heart, and soul. It is of divine origin; angels embalm the mouth it presses; and it is called—need I name it?—the kiss of love! It is known to exist; but as its delicate nature never allows it to be practised in public, and as my present observations are only made there, you cannot reasonably expect that I should say a word more on the subject. Hence, my good friend, I shall leave its charms to your own imagination. The kiss platonic, or the kiss of friendship, is almost as dear as the former, though not quite so sweet: this, I may safely confide with you too. But the kiss promiscuous, which is the last; what shall I say of it? Cold, cold! but executed with grace by the wellbred: and it is perfected by acquired elegance and practice, it being the constant ceremony at all interviews between men, women, and children. The merchants, slaves, &c. are as expert at it as the greatest lord; I mean in promptitude and ac-

tivity; as for grace, it has not yet gravitated so low. You will frequently see a couple of huge hulking fellows with greasy grisly beards, kissing and smacking, locked in each others arms, as if they were meeting after an interval of ages.

Indeed there are many sights exhibited in this country very strange to a British eye; and none more so to me than when I look from the great Russian noble in all the power of wealth, to the poor vassal in his train; who has not even an hour's liberty at his own command. Although I have been in this part of the world upwards of six months, I cannot yet prevail on myself to consider the Russian servant like the helots of the Spartans, as of a species so different from their masters, that to treat them like a horse or any other useful animal, is to pay them respect enough. There is something in the air of Britain which infuses into the generality of her sons as great a repugnance to make a slave, as to be one. Blessed, then, be the land of liberty! for it dispenses the good it enjoys; and by leaving every man free, allows him the rank in creation nature intended. Genius, industry, virtue, all find their proper spheres: and easily pass from the lower stations, into which accident might have placed them, to regions better calculated for the exercise of their powers.

That the Russian peasantry and servants are slaves, does not imply that their owners are tyrants. In most cases their comforts are very properly attended to; and cruelty or oppression is very seldom suffered to embitter their existence. You never hear them complain: and in fact they rarely have any cause of complaint; for, perfectly ignorant of the advantages of liberty, they desire it not; are quite content to be considered as much their master's property as his ox or his ass, provided they be foddered and fed as well.

The houses of the nobility are filled with these vassals, or servants, both male and female, who line the halls, passages, and entrances of the rooms in splendid liveries. In almost every antichamber some of these domestics are placed, ready to obey the commands of their lord or his guests; and continually your ears are saluted with the theatrical call of "who waits?" when two or three run in at the instant, as promptly as I ever saw the

gentlemen-in-waiting answer the like summons from the boards of Drury-Lane or Covent-Garden. What with the dwarf pages, fools, numerous attendants, and customs of hospitality practised here, I cannot but be struck with its resemblance to the establishments of our old English barons; and sometimes almost fancy myself transported back to the feudal days of Britain. You, who are as romantic as myself in these particulars, can easily understand how these antiquated usages affect my imagination and set it to work: and indeed I find it no unamusing train of thought to pursue the progress of different nations through various stages of civilization, till I can with ease point out the periods in each when their customs and manners have exactly paralleled. Thus the present manners of some countries are only correspondent with what were the manners of a neighbouring nation a century ago. And so I go on, when I have nothing else to do, making the world pass before me, as we whirl about its effigy on a globe, with our finger.

But to return to my slaves. Frequent instances have been mentioned to me of the cruelty with which some owners treat this unfortunate race. But I always found the anecdotes thus related were of very old date; and if not exaggerated, time has so altered the minds of the Russians, that such barbarities very seldom, if ever, now occur.

The boors are all slaves. Each estate has its native boors by hundreds, who perform all its agricultural duties. They are extremely industrious; and when under a good owner, daily improve and become more valuable. Their attachment to their lord, when well treated, is generally as warm, as their enmity on the reverse. Indeed, I was told the other day of a gentleman, who, possessed of a large village with its inhabitants, and wanting money, was going to sell it and them. His slaves, who loved him, hearing of this intended transfer of them to some new, and perhaps less amiable proprietor, went in a body to him, and offered to collect amongst themselves all the little savings their labours had amassed; and if the sum were inadequate to supply the deficiency, several volunteered to be sold, if he would but consent still to remain master of the village. Happy was this man's temporary poverty, since it showed him

his own worth, and proved to him the virtue of his slaves. From that day he must have considered them rather as his sons than as his vassals.

Uncultivated minds having nothing to restrain their passions, these ill starred men are very vehement in their hatred; and sometimes, though seldom, they have no little provocation. When their owner exacts from them the produce of their earnings, after having perhaps received from them an exorbitant sum for allowing them to work at their respective trades, then, very frequently, they are wrought up to such resentment as to form formidable conspiracies against the life of their oppressor. One instance I can give you, which happened a few months ago. A gentleman having by some severities disobliged his slaves, they laid hold of him, and threw him into a large boiler of hot spirits in one of his own distilling houses. He was not discovered for some days; but when the murder was known, ten or fifteen of the perpetrators were *knouted* and banished for ever to Siberia. Before I leave this subject, I must repeat another anecdote which is more singular than the former, and marks the simplicity of the one party, and the ingenious treachery of the other.

A German general, who had by his amiable qualities and military abilities risen to the highest rank in the Russian army, married a lovely woman of this country, by whom he became possessed of several estates and their appropriate slaves. He was a man of the best heart, being most susceptible of the sufferings of others, and eager to relieve them. On visiting one of these estates, he found a thousand impositions and acts of tyranny exercised on the poor boors, by six or seven farmers who rented great part of the property. His humanity was awakened; and, by degrees, he endeavoured to correct all these abuses, and gave orders to the junto of earthholders to curtail their possessions, and to separate. As this sentence, if carried into effect, would have put an end to their avaricious plans, they saw no other chance of keeping their ground than by ridding themselves of their new master; which diabolical act they accomplished with the most ingenious cunning.

They found a boor who, with the savings from his daily toil,

was anxious to buy a horse, thinking by that acquisition he would be enabled to extend his merchandize, and double his profits. The conspirators persuaded this unfortunate man to undertake the death of their enemy, and promised, in reward, twenty-eight rubles and the animal on which he had set his mind. Any scruples he might urge against the murder were overruled by the argument, that as the general was of a different religion from them, it was no greater sin than killing a dog. This decided him, and being counselled by his employers, that as soon as he had effected their wishes, he was to conceal himself for some time (after which they engaged more largely to reward him), he prepared himself for the assassination.

On the morning of the first anniversary of the marriage day of the general and his bride, the happy pair having determined to celebrate it with a *fête*, ordered certain dispositions to be made in a neighbouring wood for that purpose. That all should be worthy the commemoration of an event which had been so felicitous to him, this amiable husband mounted his horse, and rode towards the thicket to inspect the arrangements for the entertainment. The peasant had secreted himself amongst the bushes: on the sight of his victim he levelled his too well directed gun: the contents were lodged in the general's heart, and he sunk to the ground, murdered by one of the very wretches whose wrongs he had sought to redress. The terrified horse flew back to the house of his master: the blood on his coat, and the report of the gun, gave the alarm; and the fears of the unhappy lady were soon realized by the sight of men bearing in her husband's corpse. The perpetrator of the act was caught before he could escape: he confessed, and betrayed who were his accomplices. They were all seized, knouted, and sent to Siberia, and their houses burnt to the ground.

The lovely widow was inconsolable. She erected a mausoleum to her departed hero; and paying it diurnal and nocturnal visits, there wept over his murder and her grief, till the source of tears was dry. But time, that obliterator of most sorrows; and chance, whose neverfailing fund of circumstances so often presents our weal or wo, threw in her way another soldier, amiable as brave, and in a fortunate hour she saw her mourn-

ing weeds, by love's talisman changed into nuptial roses. She is now living and happy! So, dear friend, ends my dismal story. And that all dismal stories of which you and I, unluckily for ourselves, know so much, may terminate as comfortingly as the sorrows of this lady, is most devoutly wished by your faithful, &c. &c.

LETTER XXI.

Mosco, May, 1806.

I HAVE just returned from a delightful walk on the terrace of the Kremlin. In a former letter I spoke of the wide and magnificent prospect from the tower of the great church: this which I now enjoyed in strolling along the brow of the hill that fronts the palace, and which borders the river, commands a home view of most interesting particulars.

The granite quay stretches to a vast length at the base of the fortress: the Moskva, forested with vessels from the Volga, and other rivers of the interior: the foundling hospital, the various palaces of the nobility, as well as the gilding and many coloured domes of several hundred churches, extend themselves, till the horizon and its woods seem to unite the city with the sky. The fore ground is formed of the religious buildings; and the ancient wall of the Kremlin, whose eastern battlements give a striking air of romantic grandeur to the whole. The large scale on which the *enfans trouvées* presents itself, fully conveys the nobleness of its plan, being perhaps the best endowed charity in Europe. A few months ago I wrote largely to you on the subject of this institution; or rather on one of its scions at St. Petersburgh, which in every respect resembles its parent tree, excepting in the solidity of its foundation.

The hospital at St. Petersburgh is almost entirely dependent on the voluntary support of its august patroness; but this at Mosco has other sources whence it draws the wealth that

maintains it. One mean, amongst many others, of filling its treasury, arises from lending money upon property, the borrower paying a certain interest, rather more than five per cent. I should suppose; as the hospital itself takes up money at that interest for the purpose of lending it again. The borrower giving security on his goods, or property of any sort, subjects himself to its seizure and sale by public auction, should he make any default in paying the interest on the appointed day. If the sum arising from the sale be less than sufficient to reimburse the hospital, the defalcation bears further interest till the debtor can pay it all off. But should the receipts be more than the debt, the overplus is given to the late owner of the goods. In the case of his absence, which often happens under these circumstances of misfortune, the hospital retains the money now as his debtor, crediting it with interest, and ready to refund, should the owner reclaim it within a certain day. If he do not, it then becomes for ever the property of the hospital. I have attended several of these auctions, and have seen pearls, diamonds, cambrics, and many other valuable articles, sold at the usual varied prices of those capricious meetings.

The hospital admitted one thousand infants last year; one fourth of which number died; a common average of its mortality, as the wretched parents seldom resign their offspring to this asylum until either sickness or want compels them.

But to return to the citadel. The walls and towers which encircle this spot, are further extended over that part of the city which is called the Tartar town. The emperor Paul caused many earthen works, palisades, bastions, and ravelins, to be thrown up in front of that district; but they are all of little consequence, and I verily believe that independent of a few pieces of ordnance of very large calibre, not a single garrison cannon is to be found in all the fortifications. Those belonging to the regiments in barracks are not considered as attached to the city.

The Kremlin has a daily guard of between five or six hundred men. I went with the governor-general to see the parade, and found the troops to consist of a very fine body of men, recruits, but far from novices in their art. They are so well and

rapidly disciplined by means of the cane, that the change from a clumsy blundering boor, to that of a neat active soldier, is generally as instantaneous as that from one of his native winters to all the beauties of spring. He is brought up from his *derrevna* or village, with his beard and hair in the trim of nature; clad in sheepskins, linden shoes, and walking with all the trudging awkwardness of unrestrained habit. A very short period changes his aspect entirely. His beard is sheared off, his hair bound into a regular *queue;* and by way of making it grow in a more martial form, it is shaven from the forehead over the ears and half way from the back part of the head. A regimental greatcoat is put upon his person: he is booted, and set upright on his legs, at his peril not to lose his position. Thus then is he metamorphosed, and erelong has all the air of a soldier, completely getting rid of every relic of what he once had been. The custom of shaving the head answers two purposes; to put their hair in training, and to prevent desertion, this mark making discovery so certain, that few, if any, ever dare run the risk. Their mode of drill differs little from ours, as we both copied from the same model, the Prussian discipline. They are heavier than our men in taking rapid positions; but for steadiness and mechanical movements, none can exceed them.

Some little time ago the famous princess Dashcoff did me the honour to have a few auxiliary regiments reviewed before me; and I must acknowledge I never saw a more martial sight. Their picturesque uniforms, the dexterity of their evolutions, their war cries, and above all, the interest excited by the illustrious heroine who gave the word of command, produced sensations and thoughts truly gratifying. I found myself present with one of the most celebrated women in history, the friend of Catherine the great! I looked on her as one who had devoted her youth, that season of pleasure, to a patriotic zeal for her country. For this, her charms were concealed under a helmet, and her beautiful bosom braced in steel; for this she encountered personal danger, obloquy, and dared every sacrifice that was in the power of a young and lovely and highborn female to make! I contemplated her now time-marked figure with ad-

miring wonder, and received with grateful veneration the attentions with which she honoured me. These are the characters, to see whom we would travel from land to land. They are the really great, the objects truly interesting, the subjects on which my pen delights to dwell. That I have known many of them, and been esteemed by some, is a distinction so ennobling, that I defy any man of common feeling to be capable of doing an unworthy action when he finds his honour guaranteed by the respect of those "whom all men are proud to honour!"

The situation of Mosco is well worthy of such illustrious residents. It possesses many natural beauties. On the banks of the two fine rivers which encompass its circles, there are walks to suit all tastes, whether you wish to mingle with the gay crowd, or to steal alone into the romantic recesses of the woods.

Like St. Petersburgh, Mosco has its summer garden, the favourite resort of persons of all ranks. Its meandering water, undulating grounds, bridges, temples, and umbrageous avenues, render it a very charming recreation during the hot months. It originally belonged to a noble Scot, the friend and confident of Peter the First: and in these sacred groves did that immortal prince imbibe from his good, brave, and wise preceptor that greatness which hereafter entitled him to the admiration of the world. Besides the mansion once belonging to this friend of the emperor, there is a palace also in the grounds, which is usually occupied by the imperial family whenever they take a summer excursion to their ancient metropolis. At one extremity of the principal walk stands the grand military hospital, instituted by Paul; being an elegant and extensive building overlooking the river, it is very well adapted to promote the health of its sick. The waters which flow at its feet, as well as the baths contiguous, are valuable acquisitions, both to the city at large and to the hospital. An English surgeon superintends the whole; and its regularity and neatness does ample honour to his care. It is the *depôt* for all the invalids sent from the numerous military stations and garrisons in the surrounding

provinces. I understand that from two to three thousand are annually received, and that an average of one in thirty dies.

On my return through the walks of these beautiful gardens, I found them filled with crowds of pedestrians of every description, (twice a week it being a fixed *promenade*); those which most forcibly attract the notice of a stranger are the wives of the native merchants. They are dressed in all the riches their husbands can afford, in a fashion, hot, stiff, and most discordant with their figures. Their petticoat is of brocade silk gaudily flowered, and slung on their shoulders by a kind of gallowses thick with embroidery. The body is covered with a jacket either of velvet or stuff, bound with gold lace and colours. A shift sleeve reaches to the elbow. Their neck and arms are bare, hung with beads, necklaces, ear and finger rings innumerable. Some wear diadems of gold set with coloured stones and pearls; others, a large square handkerchief richly shot with silver and various hues, and thrown down their backs, one corner being ingeniously wound round their heads, making a simple and pretty *coëffure*. On an elegant woman this habit might be becoming, but with the present wearers, it only makes deformity more hideous.

Every point about these dames is the opposite of beauty. Their eyes are tolerable, but totally divested of expression. Their complexions are besmeared with white and red paint, and their teeth most perversely stained with black; not a muscle of their face ever moves: and in general their usual attitude being stationary (hardly ever walking) with their hands knit together across their persons, they stand like a string of waxen figures, gazing on the passing groups of the higher orders. From an extraordinary mode of tying their girdle they all look *as women wish to be who love their lords!* Married or single, it is just the same. You, who are so great an admirer of the exquisite symmetry of Greece and Rome, how would you start to meet a front view of one of these ladies! Relaxing stoves, warm baths, loose dresses, and negligent habits, with perhaps other causes into which I cannot penetrate, have so transformed one of the loveliest parts of the female person, that what in others is the very throne of beauty, with them is so monstrous,

that I defy any but a Russian boor not to turn from them with the most loathsome disgust. I have no doubt but that did we see them stripped of their gilded jackets we should find that they equal the Hottentots in this burthened and most wondrously elongated feature in their shapes. However, I shall be better able to decide, as I am going this afternoon to see them bathe, which, I am told they do in public without either ceremony or shame. You shall have a faithful report, I pledge you my word.

I have made a sketch of their dressed appearance, by which you may judge how ill they suit what might be a very becoming apparel on a really pretty woman. On looking at their faces you easily discern the Tartar and Kalmuc ingraftation upon the old Muscovite stock. The visage is short, the bones of the cheeks high, the forehead projecting, and the eye small. Their stature is commonly of the middle size; and from their habits of life, both men and women are inclined to be more than abundantly fat. When a tinge of the Georgian Poles and Circassians mingles with the Russian blood, the result is the most exquisite beauty. But this is generally confined to the higher ranks; and, as I said before, there is such perfect specimens of female loveliness amongst the nobility at Mosco, that were I a Praxiteles, I need go no further to form my Venus.

It is now midnight! According to my promise, before I sleep I shall give you a description of the baths of Mosco; and as they are not at all like those of Diana, you need not fear any share of Actæon's fate for daring to peep at the robeless goddesses.

Having dined at the house of count P—— in the neighbourhood of the scene, after dinner I took my course, accompanied by a friend as curious as myself, along the banks of the river which flows through the Summer-garden. The spirit of investigation led us to the foot of the hospital, where we found a couple of baths for the reception of the bathers. These purifying reservoirs being the hot baths, consisted of low wooden buildings with small openings in their sides, whence issued a thick muddy stream, flowing from the first washings of the natives, and in which they still laved their grease-incrusted

bodies as they sallied forth to enjoy the cooling waves of the river. As we approached these cleansing elevations, we beheld the waters that rolled from under their foundations filled with naked persons of both sexes, who waded or swam out from the bath in great numbers, without any consideration of delicacy or decency. From motives of gallantry we posted ourselves opposite the ladies, the better to observe the *grace* and *nymph-like beauty* of their groups. To say that they did not blush, would be to belie them; for certainly their skins were of the brightest pink: but it was a spontaneous glow; not the sensitive flush of shame; for they looked around with all the *sang froid* of females fully apparelled. And in this Eve-ish state, with a wooden pail in one hand, and a huge bunch of umbrageous birch twigs in the other, they descended the steps into the river. This vernal collection was a very convenient substitute for the fig leaves of paradise; but that ancient and primitive use was not the only one to which it was appropriated. Being of the size and shape of a broom, it was intended for the more coercive exercise of creating, while in the warm vapour, a rapid perspiration from the pores, by a sort of Sancho-like flagellation on the hide of the fair or foul bather. As soon as any of these nymphs lost sight of her lower extremities in the stream, she instantly applied herself with no small degree of vigour to pour cold water on the top of her head, by the help of the wooden utensil she carried with her into the river; the refreshing and bracing torrents thus streaming over her smoking person, soon brought it to a more delicate tint than the boiling hue with which she had issued from the stream.

Picture to yourself nearly a hundred naked naiads, flapping, splashing, and sporting in the wave with all the grace of a shoal of porpoises! No idea of exposure ever crossed their minds, no thought of shame ever flushed their cheeks; but floundering about they enjoyed themselves with as much indifference as when standing in all their trim array staring at the gay groups in the Summer-garden. Even on the confines of their bath, nay, in the very midst of it, lusty boors were seen filling their casks for the use of the city. So many masses of granite would have been regarded with equal attention by either party. With the

women bathed many men; all mingled together, just as they do in the hot springs at Bath, where both sexes boil in one cistern, looking more like sodden beefsteaks than human beings. Bad as they are in Bladud's pool, they are ten thousand times more hideous in that of the Summer-garden: for the men are almost all bearded, or grinning grimly through horrible whiskers and fierce mustachios. The bathers are of every age, form, and size; Don Quixotes, Sanchos, Sampsons, &c. as well as of all the misshapen figures that ever came from the hand of nature, or suffered the ill effects of maims, bandy, or other foes to the beauty of man. And as to the gentler sex, I can witness they were more like the real than the fancied Dulcinea; more like the buxom Maritomes, than either the agile Diana, or the beauteous Susannah, who charmed the elders of Israel to folly.

My allusion to the Hottentots was not ill conceived; for in my life I never beheld any thing so disgusting. Women of twenty years old, with a pretty symmetrized face, possessed a bosom which a painter would have given to the haggard attendants of Hecate. I will not proceed farther in my observations on this delicate part of creation; but lament that custom, fashion, and mistaken habits, have so much power to spoil what was originally the most lovely work of nature.

Amidst this superabundant group, in which the female form had indeed run to weeds, we descried a few young virgins (whose twisted hair declared them to have pretensions to that title); and their slender and serpentine figures gave us some hint that the female *form divine* was not quite obliterated from their race. Whatever admiration was called forth during this scene, fell to their share; though that they did appear fair, arose rather from comparison with their Hottentot companions, than from any real beauty in themselves.

I know not how to account for the extraordinary and quiet exposure which these ladies make of their persons; except we derive it from the old explanation *use:* and that, we find able to reconcile the most preposterous practices to our minds. That the indelicacy does not penetrate to their morals, is seen in their conduct. She who would not take the smallest trouble to hide any part of her person from the observer's eye, would,

a few minutes afterwards, when she was dressed, resent to the highest pitch of indignation any liberty taken with her charms.

A ukase issued at St. Petersburgh forbids the sexes using, in that capital, the same baths: but, as the interdict did not extend to Mosco, here I had the pleasure of seeing so extraordinary an exhibition. And, indeed, had I not witnessed the scene, I could hardly have believed the possibility of there being in existence such objects as I then beheld. The Russian women swim like geese; they bathe every Saturday, and on the eve of every holyday.

Sleep being reluctant to displace from my eyes the images of these water nymphs, I am too wide awake to go to bed; and having kept you so long in the company of one set of *belles*, I shall introduce you to another of a somewhat different appearance. I mean those that adorn the churches; not the *belles* of the cloister, but the bells of the steeple. Every religious building is provided with eight or nine at least. But the most celebrated in all Mosco are those of St. Ivan in the Kremlin, whose size and weight are equal to the *biggest Tom* that ever a bell foundry produced. There is one, now deeply sunk in the ground, of an enormous bulk. Mr. R— gave me the following estimate of its dimensions. Its weight is 432,000 pounds; its circumference at the base, twenty yards; and the thickness of its metal twenty-three inches, or perhaps two feet. Its height, to the place where the clapper is suspended, is nineteen feet. The tongue lies not far from the spot in which this mass of metal is sunk: it is of iron, and seventeen feet in length. The bell is encircled with many rims of embossed work; and was intended, when finished, to be a present from the empress Ann to the great church. I am told that it was never elevated from this spot, in which it was cast, but in cooling cracked, and so became useless. Others say, that it was raised to a very great height, but that the beam to which it was suspended taking fire, it again fell into its original bed, and sustained the present fracture in its fall. The chasm made in its side by the accident, is about the size of an ordinary door; into which the curious may enter if they have any wish to penetrate into this huge pyramid of metal. The bell cannot be seen but by a special order; the

place being boarded over, you make your entrance through a trap door. This mutilated work has a sister of a greater size in China, which, I understand, is the largest in the known world.

Having now given you a peal, or rather cheated you of one, as I have introduced you to none but silent bells, I will bid you good night, well aware that you have had lullaby enough in this letter. To-morrow I will speak to you further of the churches.

* *

May 8th, O. S. Noon.

I have not time to resume my subject; but before I close my letter I must inform you of an event that I have just been told: the widow of the great Suwarroff died this day at eleven o'clock! She was of the illustrious Prosorowski family; and bore to her renowned husband two children; Natolia who married Count Nicolas Zouboff; and Arcadius, a brave young man, emulous of his father's glory.

So pass away the great and the interesting of this earth! While the widow, or the children of a venerated character remain, we do not seem to have lost all of the person we lament: they are living monuments to his memory. His image revives whenever we look on objects that were so dear to him, and which, in a manner, once formed a part of himself. But when they are gone; when the race soon follows its founder to the grave, time rapidly draws its dimming flood over the past; and seeing the hero's actions as in a darkened mirror, remembrance involves him with the cloud of departed greatness; and making one with the group of Thermopylæ, Cressy and Blenheim, he loses that preeminence in our regrets which the memorials of his person, while living, ever renewed. Thus have many of our own brave men, within a few years, passed into the world of spirits; and are now named by Britons with as much indifference as they would speak of Talbot, of Hotspur, or of any other of our departed worthies.

The observation you yourself made on seeing Mr. West's design of the death of Lord Nelson, not a little influenced me

in these reflections. You tell me that "the picture of the death of General Wolfe stood by that of Nelson. Hardly a single person looked on the first; all eyes were turned to the last: not a tear was spared for the gallant Wolfe; not a sigh; not a word of encomium on his merits; not a regret for his untimely fall! I thought it strangely unthinking: for the very sensibility I felt on looking at Nelson, turned my eyes to Wolfe, and divided my sorrow."

It is true, my friend, you felt so, because you always think when you feel. But the feelings of many are merely the effect of infection; or are awakened by a narrow concern for themselves at being deprived of some recent good. Thoughtless of others, they acknowledge no benefactors but their own; and never having experienced in their own persons the protection which arose from the courage of some hero slain a few years before their time, they have no sympathies to excite concern for his loss; they have no generous regrets for the noble creature himself; for his being cut off in the meridian of life and of honours; for the tender relations who mourned his fall; nor for the country at large which was thus rifled of one of its best defenders.

The death and triumph of a hero are equally shortlived in the hearts of any but his personal friends. Sorrow for the one is obliterated by some more recent loss; and pride in the other superseded by the victories of some brother in fame. Few, like you, can give an equal homage to the great and good of all times. But it is a delightful sensibility, for in proportion as you feel their virtues, you enjoy them; they become endeared to you; and thus you make to yourself a second kind of existence; a sort of mental intimacy and relationship with the noblest beings of every age. In this friendship may you ever associate the idea of your faithful friend.

LETTER XXII.

Mosco, May, 1806.

AMONGST the illustrious residents in Mosco from whom I have received the most gratifying attentions is the prince U——. I have lately had the honour of being his visitor at a fine mansion which he recently purchased near the Sparrow-hills, a beautiful spot three miles from the city. This palace was built by prince Dolgorouky as a country seat; and if it does not show the skill of the architect, its situation at least bears witness to the taste of the prince.

It stands on a very high ground richly wooded; at the base of which flows the Moskva in Thames-like meanders through a luxuriant plain, varied with innumerable gardens and superb structures. On the right, terminating the view of the river, rises Mosco in all its ancient Asiatic pomp. Its myriads of glittering minarets and lofty palaces, as well as the pale citadel, form an object of transcendent grandeur; and then as a back ground, the black and distant woods skirting the horizon, give an effect to the splendor of the city which can hardly be described. I have attempted a sketch, which will give you some idea of its outline; but without the aid of colours it is impossible to depict the burnished glow of the whole, when opposed to this forest, like an evening sky of fluid gold, shining through the breaks of a thunder cloud.

On pursuing the prospect towards the left, the antiquated walls of the Divitchy convent is no less striking. The many turrets which form a security to the holy dwellings within; the long extent of the battlements; the high and slender spires, and golden domes of the chapels; and the crescents and sacred crosses rising amid the trees, marking the situation of the Andrefsky monastery; produce, altogether, a very interesting scene.

The monastery is a perfect specimen of the old architecture. Its style and ornaments resemble the Hindoo temples. I was struck with the likeness the moment I observed the building.

During my visit to the prince, I crossed the water to take a nearer view of the Divitchy. Its form is quadrangular: the walls extremely high and embattled in the eastern fashion, with many square towers at short distances. Its gates are strongly defended; and in days of old, a garrison always did duty here. It contains several churches, and the houses for the *religieuses*, which are spacious and convenient; besides places dedicated to the use of those whom accident or necessity may have forced to take shelter within the monastery.

One of the nuns was so kind as to attend me through the aisles of the great church, particularly to show me the tomb of princess Sophia, the ambitious sister of Peter the First. The outside of the edifice is of the Asiatic architecture, with gilded domes and minarets. The walls and gates are curiously painted with holy personages and miracles: but unfortunately the interior was repairing, so I was disappointed of seeing it to its usual advantage. The finest object within, was a high and rich screen overlaid with gold, interspersed with the emblazoned histories of saints and virgins. On entering the grand portico to the right, a tomb of a very simple shape was pointed out to me as the burying place of the princes Sophia. It is constructed of a large stone raised a little above the pavement, and upon it is a kind of sarcophagus, flat at the sides and tapering towards the top, like the roof of a house: it is very small, is whitened over, and generally is covered with a black pall. At the head is this inscription.

A. M. 7212.; C. æ. 1704.
On the 3d of July, O. S. died Sophia Alexovna,
Aged 46 years, 9 months and 6 days.
Her religious name was Susannah;
She was a Nun for 5 years, 8 months and 12 days;
And was buried on the 4th of July,
In this Holy Church of Smolinsko.
&c. &c. &c.

So low lies that princess, whose ambition held this empire in commotion for sixteen years! Here, shut out from all eyes, lies that exquisite beauty with which she enslaved the wise

Galitzin, and beguiled the unfortunate Strelitzes to their ruin. It was an awful moment thus to stand over the tomb of a woman who, by her actions, seemed to think that she of all creation was alone exempt from the penalty of death. To reign was her wish; and to that end she sacrificed every law of nature: thousands were slain in the contest between her party and that of Peter; by false accusations she compassed the murder of sixty loyal nobles: she plotted the death of her half-brother Peter, and finding its accomplishment impracticable, to exclude him entirely from the throne, forced her own brother the idiot Ivan and declared tzar, to marry her. What a sea of blood seemed to encompass her grave! I shuddered when I looked at the end of all this guilt—a stone bed of six feet square! Forty-six years terminated this career of ambition, murder and incest! and all for what?—a throne!

Sure there is magic in that word. For, it is to the word alone, usurpers immolate all that is valuable in the kingly dignity; the power of dispensing good and of enjoying happiness! What a bastard sort of power is that which, built upon destruction, commands a few sordid wretches, who, perhaps, only await a favourable moment to free themselves of their tyrant! It is the power of a Turk over the slaves of his seraglio; not the generous sway of a good monarch over the hearts of a vast empire. And then for happiness; the meed which every human creature seeks as the reward of his labours; how can it exist in the bosom of the traitor, the murderer, and the fratricide? All then was sacrificed by this unhappy woman to a shadow; to a shadow that vanished the moment she thought it within her grasp, and left her to a grave of guilt, and dreadful impending judgment!

The convent in which she terminated her life, contains about one hundred and fifty females; seventy-five only of whom have yet taken the veil. An appendage which, by the by, they never wear; but as a mark of their vow have their heads shaved. This they do at the age of fifty, the time when they are allowed to make their holy profession. Until that period they remain novices, and may marry if they please. To facilitate opportunities of preferring the matrimonial to the monastic

vows, they have perfect liberty; the gates of the monastery being open all day, and permission granted them to go out and receive visitors without restraint. They have each a separate apartment and every reasonable comfort. The abbess is chosen from amongst the widows of the Russ merchants, and provided she be of an unexceptionable character, may be elected without having been previously attached to any religious institution. In short, there is no law belonging to the Russian convents that does not demonstrate the rationality which dictated their establishment. As these ordinances are rather curious, I think you will not find a copy of them uninteresting. I shall give them to you as they relate both to monks and nuns.

1. No person to be received as a monk who is under the age of thirty.

2. No military person to be admitted as a monk.

3. No slave to be admitted as a monk without being emancipated by his master, or bearing an express order from the sovereign or synod. He must be able to read and write.

4. No married man who has a wife living, to be admitted as a monk, especially if in parting he gave her a license to marry again. If a husband and wife are both desirous to embrace the monastic profession, their cases must be maturely considered before permission be granted them; namely, whether they are of the lawful age, whether they have children or not, and if they have, in what situation they leave them.

5. No one having any civil employment, or who runs away for debt, or to escape punishment for any offence, to be admitted as a monk.

6. No one charged with a particular commission, unless he has dismissory letters, to be admitted as a monk.

7. No person to be admitted as a monk for money, unless he promises never to boast of it, and makes a formal renunciation of any claim to privileges beyond his brethren.

8. Nor shall any person, against whom there is no objection, be immediately admitted to the tonsure upon his entrance into the convent; but remain three years under the inspection of an approved monk; during which time the superior shall enjoin

him various services to prove his obedience. After this novitiate of three years, it is necessary to have the permission of the bishop of the diocese before he takes the habit; which permission the bishop is not to grant without the superior and monks of the convent present a certificate of the novice's efficiency. Should the novice, after the term of three years, change his mind, he shall be at liberty to depart from the monastery, and no one has a right to reproach him on that account: but should he afterwards desire to return, he must serve his novitiate over again.

9. Novices, during their novitiate, and especially near the time of their reception, shall diligently read the monastic vows, in order to examine whether they have resolution to undertake them.

10. All monks are to confess and receive the communion four times in the year.

11. They are to avoid idleness; employing themselves in reading, painting, &c.

12. They are not allowed servants, at least none but the superior, and the aged and infirm.

13. An hospital and proper persons to attend the sick and aged, to be provided in every convent.

14. Monks are not to invite guests without permission of the superior.

15. No monk may pay visits without permission; and then he must be accompanied by another monk. They must not visit in secular houses, but upon solid and lawful reasons.

16. They are to eat and drink in common in the refectory: no one is permitted to carry any thing to his own cell.

17. Neither money nor goods of other persons to be kept in a monastery; whatever is so found shall be forfeited to the monastery.

18. Neither the superior nor monks shall admit women into their cells. They are to be received in the parlour where strangers are admitted; and in every case there must be more than one monk present.

19. The monks shall strictly study the bible. The most learned amongst them shall explain it; and such only shall be be promoted to ecclesiastical dignities.

OF NUNNERIES.

1. Nuns shall never, on any pretext whatever, go out of their convent. Not even from motives of devotion, or to assist at processions or the feasts of churches. In monasteries where the church is not contiguous, secret and covered ways are to be made from the convent to the church, for the nuns to pass through.

2. No nun shall receive the tonsure before she is fifty years old. If a young woman declares an inclination to become a nun, the circumstances of her resolution shall be strictly examined; and then she may be allowed to reside in the convent, being always under the inspection of an aged and discreet nun until she has attained the prescribed age: she may then take the vows. But should she in the mean time change her mind, and be inclined to marry, she is at full liberty.

3. Nuns must not pass their time in idleness; but must always be employed in some work, as spinning, sewing, making lace, &c. For which purpose proper teachers shall be provided to each monastery.

RULES FOR THE ARCHIMANDRITES, OR SUPERIORS.

1. The heads of monasteries shall be chosen from those monks whose manners are irreproachable, and who are distinguished by their knowledge of the duties of the monastic life. Besides which, they must be intimately conversant with the scriptures, and with the rules of their order, and labour, not only for their own salvation, but for that of their brethren.

2. They shall admonish those who desire to be admitted against the will of their relations; as husbands who forsake their wives, wives who forsake their husbands; parents, who by imprudent vows would sacrifice their children to a monastic life; reminding them such resolutions are displeasing to God, and contrary to the doctrine of Christ.

We are struck at once with the excellence of these regulations, when compared with those which relate to monasteries in the Latin church; and cannot but particularly approve of the care with which the superstition of celibacy is guarded

against in the young and inexperienced. To the immortal tzar Peter are they indebted for this liberal code.

The dress of the nuns of the Divitchy is a black habit with wide sleeves; the whole lined with reddish brown. A black velvet cap, fitting close to their shaven heads, coming down over the ears, and under the chin in a sort of bandage. The novices have a cap pointed at the top. Their hair is plaited, and hangs down behind an immense length: it is fastened in the pole of the neck by a piece of brown taffeta which shades half the *queue* as a sort of curtain. Their robe is of black cloth with tight sleeves, and has also a cape. The fashion of the hair marks the unsworn vestal state, as the vowed nuns are deprived of theirs.

My tonsured conductress showed me several cases of holy relics. They consisted of bones, wood, teeth, and pieces of wearing apparel, curiously preserved and highly venerated. She also led me into the apartments which had been inhabited by the princess Sophia. I entered the cell wherein her haughty mind so often brooded in disappointment over her fallen greatness; I looked through the very windows from which she had beheld the execution of numbers of her party, and particularly of three of her most intimate confederates, who were hanged on gibbets within a few yards of the convent wall. Peter ordered this horrible scene to be performed before her own eyes, as a small punishment for the ambition which had conspired against his life, and drawn his subjects into rebellion.

These gloomy rooms have lately been newly fitted up; but much of their old furniture remains; particularly the religious pictures which adorned the walls in her time; and other holy articles necessary to a nun's cell. Having gone through the whole of the church, I took my leave of my saintly conductress, thanking her most sincerely for the trouble she had taken in walking so long, and for the patience with which she answered my numerous questions.

Soon after I left the vicinity of the Divitchy, I was invited by prince W—— to go down to his country residence on the day of the Holy Trinity. It being the *fête de village* of the prince, I expected much rustic festivity; for general entertain-

ment, I could be at no loss, as my illustrious host is not only master of all the graces of hospitality, but eminent for learning and talents. His palace is finely situated, and built of stone with great taste and splendor; possessing every accommodation for the gayest amusements and the profoundest study.

When I arrived, the whole family, visitors and vassals, were assembled in the church; and when I joined the party, were arranged in a circle before the holy screen. The pavement was strewn with flowers and green herbs, each person holding in his hand a bouquet. One was also presented to me on my entrance. All the peasantry were dressed in their best, and decorated with this vernal ornament. Three priests officiated, the superior of them being a man of a most venerable aspect. Many prayers were read and anthems sung; after which a sermon was delivered with great judgment and feeling: at least so it seemed to me, from the energy of the preacher and the riveted attention of the congregation. Towards the conclusion the whole party, as well as the two assistant ecclesiastics knelt down, holding the flowers up to their faces.

I could not learn any satisfactory explanation of the religious use of these nosegays; some telling me they were brought as the first offerings of spring; others, that they were meant to wipe away the tears which they shed during the service. I fancy that this practice, like that of giving eggs at Easter, is now known by the custom only, the origin being entirely lost in the lapse of time.

The ceremony finished by the congregation kissing the cross, and receiving the benediction and holy water.

The sacred duties of the day over, the villagers prepared to adjourn to their vernal sports; but alas, both I and they were disappointed in this! It rained heavily, and continued so unremittingly, that this part of the entertainment was obliged to be given up, and the peasantry, after giving a few blank looks to the watery heavens, feasted plentifully within doors. Well charged with brandy, and covered with gay ribbons, at an early hour, they very joyously and contentedly returned home.

A splendid dinner, and a most delightful ball, closed the day in the hospitable halls of the prince. Amongst the guests I

met with a gentleman of extraordinary mental acquirements. His name was so difficult of pronunciation that I cannot recollect it; but, in our conversation, he gave me a little account of the origin of Mosco, which I have remembered rather more correctly.

It was founded by the son of Vladimir, on some confiscated lands originally belonging to an imperious nobleman who had offended this prince. They consisted of morasses intersected with branches, or streamlike ditches from the rivers Moskva and the Neglia; near the conflux of which rose a hill, commanding the surrounding country, and well protected by the encircling marshes. It was richly covered with trees; and its environs of plain and forest rendered the situation doubly romantic. The young prince saw and became enamoured of the spot, and immediately ordered a mansion to be built there; in which he afterwards passed the greatest part of his time. Few advances towards its becoming a city, took place during his life. But undoubtedly to this palace is Muscovy indebted for its capital. It was a point of attraction around which houses and streets gradually assembled until they spread themselves to a large town.

Daniel, the son of the sainted Alexander Nefsky, was also enraptured with the situation; and not only increased his predecessor's buildings, but added, for its security, palisadoes and a deep ditch. Thus did it continue, growing by degrees within its own boundary, till the succession of Dimitri Ivanovitch Donskoy, who employed an Italian architect to erect a strong and well defended wall. This was accomplished towards the close of the fifteenth century. The same prince embellished the city with several new and noble churches.

Mosco has often felt the miseries of war. In the year 1384, Tamerlane stormed the place, and held it for some time. During the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries, the Tartars again overran the greater part of Russia; and the old capital with the rest. But Ivan Vassilovitch drove them thence: and to him much of its succeeding splendor and consequence may be attributed. From this period it became the residence of the Tzars. I fancy few empires have had the seat of government

so frequently changed as Russia; for few empires were ever so extensive. From its magnitude it comprised many independent principalities; each of which, according to the ambition or genius of their respective sovereigns, at different times held all the others in subjection. Thus Kief, Vladimir, Twer, Novgorod, Mosco, and St. Petersburgh, may all boast of having governed the country. The whole extent of this vast empire being now firmly fixed under the sceptre of the Romanoff family; and as it aspires to naval consequence, St. Petersburgh is likely to remain for ever the capital of Russia; unless some political earthquake shake the north with as dire a fury as it has done the south. And, to avert which from our old ally, every honest Englishman will unite his prayers with those of, your faithful friend.

LETTER XXIII.

Mosco, June, 1806.

IT being a most sultry day, the prominent object of my present feelings (I will not dignify bodily perceptions by the name of thoughts) is the weather. And, as I write to you as I would speak, you must take the subjects, dull or entertaining, just as they rise. The weather, then, being a very interesting investigation to us English, I shall indulge you with a few observations on the climate of Russia. Having passed both a winter and a summer under its skies, I consider myself tolerably learned on my proposed theme.

St. Petersburgh is in lat. 59° 56′ N. Although surrounded by flat and marshy lands, that city is by no means unhealthy. The air is uncontaminated by pestilential vapours, as care is taken to drain the swamps; which otherwise, with the Augean additions from the *cleanliness* of the lower inhabitants, might prove dreadfully noxious. The police manages all this with admirable diligence; and maugre the natural love which the *canaille* seem to have to wallow in an uncleansed stye, I never saw a race

more healthy than the common people are in Russia; and were it not for their excessive use of brandy, I believe the rigour of the climate, and their constant exercise, would prolong their days to an almost patriarchal date.

The higher orders, from indulgence, luxurious living, little exercise and hot stoves, are very susceptible of colds: indigestions, unwieldiness, and shortened lives, are the natural consequence. This is the case with most; but many, who are aware of the ill effects of such customs, discard them; and are as active and hale as the stoutest of our countrymen.

Hence you will observe, that a climate is not to be judged by the general appearance of the people of fortune residing under its influence; habits of their own counteract its effects. It is from the peasantry we must draw our judgment: and I will venture to say, that in no country I ever saw more robust men than I met with in the natives of Russia.

There are only five degrees between Mosco and St. Petersburgh. The climate of the old capital is even more salubrious than the new. Being situated on high grounds, it has a great advantage. Two fine rivers run through its centre. The streets are all so spacious that no foul air can stagnate in any one of them. The atmosphere is generally clear, and the weather settled. In summer, though it is hot, there are no noxious vapours to render it dangerous; and in winter the air is so pure, so bright and exhilarating, that you seem to inhale the very elixir of life into your lungs. It is impossible to describe the animating feelings which these ethereal breathings excite in the breast: and as the bath of ether, through which we move, embraces every part, it seems to brace each nerve, and fill us with a spring of life enchanting and exhaustless.

In the following table I give you the length of the days at the summer and winter solstice. For instance, when in winter the day is the shortest, the sun rises and sets according to this calculation; differing only in the summer, by the day being of the greatest length when this order is reversed.

	Sun rises.		Sun sets.	
	Hours.	Minutes.	Hours.	Minutes.
At Archangel	10	24	1	36
St. Petersburgh	9	15	2	45
Tobolsk	8	56	3	4
Riga	8	47	3	19
Mosco	8	37	3	23
Kief	8	7	3	53
Astracan	7	48	4	12

By this also may be seen the degrees of heat and cold, according to Reaumur, and Farenheit.

To me the northern winter is far preferable to its summer. I mean at Mosco or St. Petersburgh, the (to Russians) milder regions, though with you, they would be deemed so penetrating, that were it not for furs, and the exercise the rigour of the climate compels us to take, we English might, if as thinly clad as the warmest of ye all in Britain, stand a good chance of becoming stationary, like poor Mrs. Lot, not a pillar of salt, but a huge erect icicle.

If the cold be then so intense in the degree of Mosco, what must it be in the latitude of Archangel! The inconveniencies of so rigorous a climate, the want of society, and having many days when the sun is scarcely seen, rising at ten o'clock and setting at one; with the addition of being so far from all knowledge of what is passing in the rest of the world, must make a rational creature find such a life a very sorry pilgrimage, or rather an *anchoritism*, worse than that amid the arid deserts of Egypt. Yet to these apparently accursed spots, we find interest lead men, as merchants, to pass many a year of their lives, shut out from every comfort of existence. Strange infatuation of man, to waste his days in providing for a period which he never sees! From youth to age he suffers every privation that inclement elements, cheerless labours, and joyless society can inflict, to amass a hoard of wealth, useless to him there: yet there he lives, gathering more and more, daily intending to return home to his native country and enjoy his riches; and yet putting it off for another bag of gold, till death surprises him. Then on his cold bed, he finds that he has suffered and

toiled in vain: a kindred, who had perhaps forgotten all of him but his name, are to reap the reward of his labours, while he fills a dismal grave beneath the frozen pole!

This terrible country, which seems as if it really lay under an interdict from heaven, is formed of sterile rocks, morasses, and naked mountains. Rarely a living soul is seen to animate the dreary solitude; not an ear of corn ever ripens there; and the utmost of their harvest is a little poor barley: not a fruit tree of any sort ever cheers the eye; all is one wide waste of desolation. It is in these iron regions that we hear of travellers, nay whole families, being frozen to death. Water freezes as it falls; and birds drop from the heavens hard as marble. Often groups of men and horses have been discovered on the high roads, in various attitudes, dead and stiff, and petrified to ice. Instances have been known of boors being brought by their horses into villages and towns, lifeless, sitting upright with every appearance of existence, holding their whip and reins. This happens even between Mosco and St. Petersburgh, when the winters are particularly severe.

It is a very common thing for the nose, ears, or any other extremity exposed to the air, to be frostbitten, which effect takes place unfelt by the sufferer himself; and if some friendly person is not passing by early in the operation to give notice of its seizure, the consequence is inevitable. If on the instant the part congealed be not well rubbed with snow, to recal circulation, the result is obvious; a few moments places the afflicted in a most *mortifying* situation, and a few hours deprive him of ears, fingers, or nose; a circumstance not enviable, although he has the consolation that he runs no risk of its ever happening again.

Having brought you to Archangel, though rather mysteriously, as I never was there myself! I shall give you a little insight into the interesting particulars of the place. I gained them from a merchant of great respectability, who had often visited that corner of the empire; so you may be satisfied of seeing as truly through his eyes as through mine.

Archangel is the capital of a province of the same name. It is so called from a monastery dedicated to the Archangel

Michael, which is near the principal town. You may judge how cold the province is from its being bounded on the north by the Frozen Ocean. Amid these terrible rocks of ice, Sir Hugh Willoughby, the famous commander of our queen Elizabeth, in seeking a northeast passage to China, was imprisoned with his whole fleet and perished. Chancellor, who commanded a small squadron under him, chanced to be driven by stress of weather into a bay near the mouth of the Dwina; there he landed: and so became the first Briton that ever was known to set foot on the Russian shore. This very haven that gave him shelter, was that of Archangel: and soon after his arrival, such communications were made to the tzar Ivan Vasilovitch II, that a trade was commenced between the two countries.

The principal articles of export were then potash, caviar, tallow, wax, hides, hemp, feathers, tar, yarn, beef, rhubarb, Chinese and Persian silks, cork, bacon, cordage, furs, &c. a curious assemblage! The commerce rapidly increased; and Archangel continued the sole port of any consequence in Russia, till the building of St. Petersburgh removed the principal trade to the havens of the Baltic.

The town of Archangel is comprised in one long street of wooden houses. It has a court of admiralty, dockyard, and a fine monastery, which is the residence of its bishop. Extensive forests, the timber of which is a great article of traffic, grow in this government, and in that of Olonetz, its near neighbour. The exportation of larch being expressly prohibited, deal and masts of fir are the only timber the merchants can send to sea. Very few of our nation are now there; the founding of St. Petersburgh drawing from those inclement regions all those whose fortunes were not as barren as the soil. So much for Archangel! which, if I were to consult my own feelings, I would rather denominate Arch-devil! And considering the poet's description of the frozen as well as the burning hell, I do not think that I should name the borders of the polar sea amiss.

I shall now thaw your congealed veins, and bring you back to the vernal months of summer. During this season, Mosco,

like most other great cities, loses most of its gay inhabitants. As soon of the sultry weather sets in, they take their flight to their respective country seats. From this cause the population varies almost incalculably in the two seasons of winter and summer; as each of the noble families seldom departs or arrives without sixty or seventy persons in its suite, besides two or three hundred slaves. This exit and entrance make an alteration of nearly 50,000 souls. The multitude who people this metropolis in the colder months amounting to 359,000, and in the warmer to 300,000. This does not include the villages close to the city, as they contain souls to the number of 60,000, or more.

I have already mentioned to you some of the most delightful country residences of the nobility around Mosco: a few others I shall here notice, in which I have enjoyed some of the pleasantest moments of my northern travels. One in particular, Ostanknia, a mansion of count Tcheremetoff is magnificent in its structure, and most romantically situated. It is furnished in the finest taste, and possesses many valuable antiques; amongst the most excellent is a statue, named on the pedestal *the goddess of health*. Its drapery is exquisite, and the form of the figure of the first Grecian mould. The feet and one hand are modern, and the head seems to have been also restored; but the rest is in good preservation, and fully declare it to have been the work of the classic ages. The count gave 1200 rubles for it. Indeed all that belongs to this nobleman is of the best in taste and costliness. Besides Ostanknia he has other fine residences, but the most admired is that of Kuscova, about seven versts from Mosco. The buildings and gardens are in a princely style, having a superb theatre, banqueting house, and hermitage. The noble owner frequently gives entertainments here, every way harmonizing with his own fine taste, and the elegance of his habitation. Cards, and all sorts of games of chance, are in great request. "Surely (you will cry), this is no very happy instance of the *tasteful* entertainments of Kuscova!" True; though it may be of their fashion. The nobility, in general, are so enamoured of what

they term the fascinating suspense of these amusements, that the want of them would be worse than a penance. However, as suspense of any kind is purgatory to me, I have not yet learnt their art; and as you hold the whole in contempt from spade-ace down to a tetotum, I will make my bow to the card-table, and turn to more congenial subjects.

However, you will perceive by all that I have formerly said, that the Russians are also particularly fond of pleasures out of doors. Their cavalcades, promenades, and *fêtes champêtres* in the summer; and their sledging parties in the winter, are not a little friendly to hilarity and health. A thousand gay excuses are formed to take them into the air; and so, for once, fashion is favourable to the wholesome. For instance, I went the other afternoon to a spectacle where all the beauty and rank of Mosco were assembled. It was to see a Frenchman ascend in a balloon, (for there is hardly a nation in the known world whom their flights do not set agape!) Here I had an opportunity of not only enjoying the fresh air, the sight of so many lovely women, but also of observing the excellence of that police I before spoke of: multitudes of people, and a crowd of carriages, not to be numbered, were on the spot. Not an altercation ensued; every vehicle moved on and off in rotation, remaining perhaps for the space of a minute until the soldiers of the police had ascertained whether its proprietor was ready to reenter. If not, the next drove up, and so the rest in order. It is a military arrangement; and as such all its officers and soldiers are regimentally clothed. They are well mounted, and also well vested with authority; which I have frequently seen applied to the heads and backs of the boors and coachmen.

One amusement I must not omit noticing, which they call coursing. In my mind, when managed with even the most plausible address, it can never be a humane pastime; and as it is ordered here it is a cruel one. With us it has an apology in the health produced by its attendant exercise, and the delights of a pleasurable suspense. But here the recreation is so simplified, that it hardly seems to contain any thing but the murder of the animal. In England we have the social anxiety of beating an interesting and extensive country, and of following the

game, when sprung, for several hours, in swift and jocund pursuit. The attention kept awake, the spirits exhilarated, and life imbibed in every coming gale, give an intoxication to the senses which may very readily make the huntsman forget the sufferings of the chase. But here all is the reverse.

A few days ago I was invited to be a spectator of one of these scenes: and obeying the summons, soon found myself on the extensive plain which extends along one side of the city. A concourse of people of all ranks was assembled, with about a hundred and twenty greyhounds in couples. These animals are formed with the nicest symmetry, and they are so strong and powerful in their hold, that nothing they once strike their teeth into ever escapes. Their coats are uncommonly beautiful, and the hair on their tails so redundant, that they are usually called fantailed greyhounds.

On the same spot where the group had met, were boxes placed at certain distances, each containing a hare which had been previously snared and cooped in this solitary habitation till the day of the sport. At an appointed moment the *amateur*, to whom the dogs belonged, and for whose entertainment this lively and humane pastime was prepared, gave the word! when suddenly one of the little creatures was let loose from its prison; and almost as soon, two of the hounds were untied and allowed to pursue it. The start the poor hare had was probably not more than three hundred yards; of course the chase was very brief. The terrified animal was soon overtaken, and after a few doubles the canine pair buried their teeth in the heart of the panting fugitive. About thirty of these miserable little creatures fell in this manner; each coursed by fresh dogs; and each destroyed almost immediately on being started.

The promoter of the diversion did not seem to enjoy it greatly, and as small a degree of animation appeared in the faces of the spectators. Indeed, from what I have seen of this amusement, as well as of Russian horse-racing, I must suppose that the habits of this country are inimical to the activity of blood which rushes through the veins of an English hunter, shooter, or racer. Our early education to exercise of all sorts gives a stimulus to mind and body that impels Englishmen to

undertake every enterprise with intrepidity, and confirms them to pursue it with an undaunted resolution to overcome. The severity of the Russian winter is a sufficient excuse for the want I observe: an iron frost, with the threatened loss of toes or fingers, being no very attractive season for the sportsman to take the field. The extreme heat of summer is equally a foe to the vigorous exercise which such amusements demand; and as for the temperate days of spring or autumn, they know them not. The heat sets in as rapidly as the cold disappears; and the summer months, though not many, are scorching to an intolerable degree. The peasant sows his corn with little labour, often without the trouble of a plough, and reaps his harvest in less than three months.

During the summer the very plagues of Egypt are let loose upon you, in the shape of flies, that fill the air like dust, and musquitoes whose bites cover the skin with inflammation, and raise itching to perfect agony. These are a few of the annoyances which a little disturbed my pleasure during the delicious hours I have enjoyed in this hospitable, and to me, ever dear country.

I was glad to make my escape from the murder of the poor hares; for, as I looked on their writhing limbs, I could not but think that this little animal *in corporal sufferance feels a pang as great as when a giant dies;* and marvelling at the contradictory nature of man, I directed my course towards some of the public edifices I had not yet seen; and taking sanctuary first in the church, felt my meditations more reconciled to my brethren of mankind, when I found myself within the consecrated walls of St. Martinus Pravidnick. This fabric was reared at the sole charge of Mr. Shagaroff, a Russian China merchant of great goodness and piety, who expended 250,000 rubles in its completion. The portico is extremely beautiful, and the general style of the architecture pure and elegant. It is the finest modern building in the whole city, and in every respect does honour to the taste and devotion of the founder.

Its simplicity made a striking contrast in my mind with the gorgeous magnificence of the *Troitza* (or monastery of the Trinity) at some distance from Mosco; and which, for splendor

and riches, is one of the most wonderful places in the empire. It is a Golconda in itself; a Peru; such a treasure-house is it of gold, diamonds, pearls, and every precious endowment with which piety could adorn the holy place. Besides the interest attached to it as containing the shrine of St. Sergius, it has another of a more secular stamp. This was the sanctuary in which the young tzar Peter when a boy, and his brother tzar Ivan, with his sister-wife the turbulent Sophia, embattled themselves against the rebellious Strelitzes. To these necessities of princes, we must attribute so many of the religious buildings in Russia being regularly fortified.

The tomb of St. Sergius is decorated with a canopy of massy silver, supported by large pillars of the same metal. The screen is of the most magnificent workmanship, and the hallowed utensils are covered with jewels. Most churches have several costly dresses for the bishops and officiating priests. These are generally made out of the embroidered palls which are brought into the church with the bodies of deceased nobles buried there. But the sacred habiliments of the *Troitza* are of the most superb order. There are fifteen different magnificent vestments for the archimandrite of this monastery, and as many mitres of gold enriched with jewels. One of the ornaments of this priest, worn on his breast instead of a cross, was given to the church by the empress Elizabeth, and cost 16,000 pounds. One of his robes which he wears on Easterday, made of crimson velvet embroidered with pearls, is valued at 14,000 pounds. Were I to describe the other vestments, and the variety of crucifixes, mitres, pyxes, golden cased relics, &c. glittering with gems, I should tire your patience to read and mine to write. Suffice it to say, that Aladan himself, when his wonderful lamp introduced him into the treasury of the genii, never saw a greater assemblage of riches in one spot, than may be beheld in the *Troitza* monastery.

Such ornaments to a church certainly dazzle the senses; and I am afraid too much engage them to allow the heart to have any share in the scene: and if it had, I fear it would be too much employed in admiring the rich productions of the earth to think of the brighter splendors of heaven. A noble simplici-

ty, appears to me to be the proper character of a building devoted to the worship of the Creator. The mean, barnlike plan of some modern churches in England, and the bare walls and bald timber galleries of the generality of the chapels, are equally excessive on the other side. There is a medium between the gorgeous decorations in one country, and the penurious plainness in the other; a sort of structure, in which we might recognise the beauty of holiness, and worship the Giver of All, in a place harmonious with his simplicity and greatness.

I cannot leave you in a better place than the church; so, bidding God bless you, shall for the present say farewel!

LETTER XXIV.

Mosco, June, 1806.

HAVING heard much of the particular gloom, the sort of inquisitorial terrors of the prisons on this side the Baltic, my curiosity was not a little excited to penetrate beyond their grates. On expressing my wish to his excellency the military governor, he was so obliging as to send an orderly officer with me to one of these iron securities of the public safety; having previously given notice to the keeper that I should see every thing within the gates.

The building is of brick, encircled by a high wall flanked with round towers, like an ancient fortress. An officer's guard does duty there, which turned out on my arrival and presented arms. I was conducted through the several passages, apartments or dungeons; and was shown all the persons confined for crimes and misdemeanors. Debtors are in a different place. During my walk I had frequent occasion for a handkerchief to *pass between the wind* and my olfactory nerves, as smells, somewhat different from the *pouncet-box* of Harry Percy's *popinjay*, *ever and anon* assailed my *nose!*—But it was a jail! and they who have ever been induced to visit, even in our country, these

neglected receptacles for guilt and misery, will not be surprised that in Russia they should be still more noisome. The squalid poverty of the unhappy creatures engendering diseases, their uncleaned persons, filthy garments, and more filthy habits; and then so many inhabiting one chamber, so impregnates the air with pestilence, that I only wonder they do not all die of the plague in the course of a month.

There were no cells where a prisoner might have the comfort of being alone: all, whatever might be the individual's crimes, without any discrimination are stuffed into one apartment, inhaling in every breath a double infection of polluted air and polluted morals. In the midst of this distress there was a single room which bore a less intolerable appearance. It was the hospital, in which lay about sixteen persons. Here I saw something like beds; but in the other chambers the prisoners had no other couches than bare wooden benches. When I view the wretchedness of these places, I cannot but suppose that the sentence of death is no increase of punishment to their inmates. Here they drag on a dying life, or rather a tortured one: miserable fare, miserable sleep, (for rest we cannot call it on so hard a pillow) and an atmosphere fraught with every calamity which foulness can inflict; what are we to say to such an existence? I would not thrust my vilest enemy into this pit of horrors, for all the security his imprisonment might offer.

Long dark and narrow passages, without ventilation, led to the different rooms. In the centre of the building stood the chapel; the only place in which it was possible to breathe with any safety. It was plainly fitted up and decently clean. Turning from this temporary asylum from the surrounding pestilential vapours, I drew in a most lengthened respiration to serve me during my next exploring, and placing my glove up to my nostrils, followed my conductors along a very gloomy aisle which brought me to what they called the state part of the prison. I found seven persons here, apparently more comfortably appointed than the forlorn wretches in the humbler department. I was told that these distinguished culprits were officers, committed for the offence of forging notes on the imperial bank. They were condemned to the prison for a certain time; after which their

earthly career is to be run, and to terminate, in the mines of Siberia; that they may have ample communion with the specie, and enjoy it for ever in its virgin purity!

There is something in this judgment strikingly just; and assuredly it seems more adapted to the crime than the summary punishment of death. It serves the country on the very point against which the injury was directed; and so while the delinquent is punished, and his example warns others, the government is benefited by his labour. Sir William Meredith, a worthy member of our own senate, speaks so well to this purpose, and his observations have made such an impression on me, that I cannot forbear sanctioning my antipathy to death as a general punishment, by repeating a few of his sentiments.

The Mosaic law (he remarks) ordained that for a sheep or an ox, four and five fold should be restored; and for robbing a house, double; that is, one fold for reparation, the rest for example and punishment: and the forfeiture was the greater as the property was more exposed, so making the preservation of their own a sure guardian of their neighbour's. If the thief came by night it was lawful to kill him in the act; but if he came by day he was only to make restitution; and if he had nothing, he was to be sold for his theft. This is all that God required in felonies, and who can be a better judge of the human heart than He? Indeed, so much is moderation in these cases the universal sentiment, that I cannot find in history any sample of such laws as the British penal code excepting that which was framed at Athens by Draco. He made every offence capital upon the modern way of reasoning, "that petty crimes deserve death, and he knew nothing worse for the greatest." His laws, it was said, were written with blood; but they were of short duration, being all, excepting one against murder, repealed by the wise Solon.

When the great Alfred came to the English throne he found the kingdom overrun with robbers: what did he do? Not make his country a forest of gibbets; the expedient of hanging never entered his head. He instituted a police which was to render every township responsible for the felonies committed within its precincts. Thus, property became the guardian of property;

and robbery was so effectually stopped that in a very short time a man might travel through the kingdom, unarmed, with his purse in his hand.

Treason, murder, rape, and burning a dwellinghouse, were all the crimes that were punishable with death by our good old common law: and such was its reluctance to shed blood, that if recompense could possibly be made, life was not to be touched. Treason being against the king, the remission of that crime lay in the sovereign's breast. If a ravisher could satisfy the indignation of the injured woman, she might marry him even under the gallows, and take him from death to life. But now, no restitution can appease the law if it once seizes its victim. A man is hanged for treason, for murder, for forgery, for theft, for stealing half a crown! I cannot but recount one instance of many, which shows the iron severity of these Draco laws.

About the time of a great British armament the husband of a poor woman was pressed and sent to sea, her goods were seized for some debts of his, and she, with two infant children, turned into the streets to beg. She was young, not nineteen, and very handsome. Her beauty might have furnished another woman with ample stores of subsistence: here was at least something to praise as well as pity in the poor unfortunate. She went to a linendraper's shop, took some coarse linen off the counter and slipped it under her cloak; the shopman saw her, and *she laid it down:* here was restitution; yet for this she was hanged. Her defence was, "that she had lived in credit, and wanted for nothing till the pressgang stole her husband from her; but since then she had no bed to lie on, nothing to give her children to eat, and they were almost naked; and perhaps she might have done something wrong, for she hardly knew what she did." The parish officers testified the truth of this story: but it seems there had been much shoplifting about Ludgate; and example was thought necessary, and this unhappy mother was hanged for the satisfaction of a few shopkeepers. When brought to receive sentence she behaved in so frantic a manner, that none could doubt her distracted state of mind: and, O pitiless fate! when she set out for Tyburn the youngest child was sucking at her breast!

There does not occur to my thoughts a proposition more abhorrent to nature and to reason, than that in a matter of property, when restitution is, or can be made, blood should still be required. But in regard to our whole system of criminal law, and much more to our habits of thinking and reasoning upon it, there is a sentence of the Roman orator which would be very aptly addressed to those who can yet reduce the British code to its original purity.—*Nolite, quirites, hanc sævitiam diutius pati; quæ non modo tot cives atrocissime sustulit, sed humanitatem ipsam ademit consuetudine incommodorum.*

But, as punishment of crimes is necessary for the sake of deterring others by example, of all modes of punishment, I should prefer that which is productive of the most example. Death is momentary, labour permanent: an execution is soon forgotten; but hard toil is beheld every day, for perhaps a long course of years, and is thus an hourly warning to the commonalty at large. On these principles I approved the condemnation of the Russian forgers to the mines: and as you are equally a friend to humanity with the good Sir William, I will not apologise for leading you such a sweep from the Moscovite dungeons, to hear a few pleadings for the miserable inmates of our own.

But now to return. A little gentleman issued from this state apartment (and in a most sorry state it was, when I had a nearer view!) and addressed me in French. The superintendant who walked with us speaking nothing but Russ, I received the salutation with due courtesy and accepted his offer to become our interpreter. My friend Mr. B——, who was with me, asked him if he were one of the inhabitants of the room before us; he replied no, and added, that his crime was nothing more than taking a servant without a passport. There was an evidence in his look and manner that contradicted his statement, and very clearly demonstrated to us, that we were in the company of an idle vagabond, who probably never had a servant to pass, and who most likely had found his way to the prison for want of a creditable credential for himself. He said he was like ourselves (we were obliged to him for the compliment!) a foreigner, a Pole. Poor, unhappy Poland, how wert thou degraded by thy claimant! He was to be confined for nine months, so long was

this prison to travail with its precious burthen; and then he might return to his own country, if he were not stopped again at the barriers for want of a passport! However, he was very civil; and explained and interpreted for us with all the action and volubility of a Frenchman.

Through him we learnt that the male prisoners labour all day in filing bark into a dust; for tanning I suppose; for here our Pole's interpretations failed us; he either did not know its use, or so bungled at the interpretation, or we were so obtuse in understanding, that we could not at all comprehend what he meant. As we proceeded farther over the prison I could not find any who were confined for any extraordinary crime. One man alone was shown to me who was a prisoner for a species of murder: he had quarrelled with his neighbour at cards, and by an unlucky blow killed him on the spot. His sentence was soon to be executed; the knout and banishment to Siberia.

I was very curious to see the apparatus for this dreadful punishment, as well as the *dreadful he* who so dextrously executes it on the backs of the wretched mortals whose ill fate lays claim to his abilities. As no one was then immediately in waiting for the ceremony, we requested that the mode of inflicting the knout might be shown to us. The executioner was a man of huge and herculean aspect, of a dark and sallow complexion, with a determined and ferocious face, having black hair and a grisly beard. When I saw him come forth from his wooden hut in the courtyard of the prison, he reminded me of the Abelino of Venice. His dress was the usual striped shirt of the country, with loose trowsers of a similar linen. He receives ten rubles yearly; and, they say, is the very first practitioner in his line. On an average, one unfortunate wretch a month, suffers, in different degrees of severity according to his offence, under the horrid flail of this tormentor.

Being called upon to exhibit his apparatus and prowess to us, which we the more readily demanded as his victim was to be only a block of wood, he untied a leathern wallet which hung before him, and drew out a pair of iron pincers, constructed for the purpose of slitting the nose; which was done at a snip, taking out a very large piece. Another instrument he ex-

hibited for marking the forehead, or any other part, according to the direction of the sentence. It was shaped like a round brush, being strongly set with iron teeth. The knout (or whip) is formed thus: its handle is of wood, about a foot in length, very strong, and hard woven round with leather. To this is attached a stout and weighty thong, much longer than the handle, fastened in the manner of a flail. Next comes a well dried strip of buffalo's hide, much like pliable horn. This the executioner puts on the knout afresh every twenty lashes. Its shape is tapering to a point; being full a quarter of an inch thick, and very long.

Having adjusted this efficient part of the grand instrument of his vocation, he placed himself about four paces from where the supposed culprit was, to stand or kneel, and putting the thong fast between his legs, he drew it up behind him, and then seized the handle with both hands; and stepping two paces forward, raising the terrible machine over his head, he made a straight down cut, which fell on a thick board making a hollow deep enough to bury your finger. This he repeated three or four times. If he knouts every individual with the same force he did the piece of wood, each stroke must find the bone. I omitted to see the thing to which the sufferer is bound; but I was told by one who had witnessed the punishment, that it is a sort of upright block of wood, to which the neck, wrists, and knees are strongly fastened. It is deemed reproachful to touch the knout. An opinion that marks the horror in which it is held, that even any voluntary contact with the instrument is thought an abomination. I shuddered at the apparatus; yet, should there happen any execution during my stay in Russia, I shall certainly contrive to be present at the terrific scene.

On the evening of the day in which I had visited the prison, my friend and myself received an invitation from prince G—— who was going to be encamped at a short distance from Mosco. His regiment consisted of three battalions, and being on the peace establishment, contained about seven hundred men in each. We overtook it on its march, and found it proceeding in fine military order, with wagons for transporting the camp equipage, ammunition, &c. &c.

The regiment and ourselves arrived on the ground about eight o'clock in the evening. The men halted and wheeled into line. After piling their arms, they commenced, with great regularity, to pitch their tents; each being set in order by the number that were to inhabit it, eleven being the complement. Of course the regiments which formed the encampment were divided into wings. The colours and drums were in the centre, leaving a wide street in a direct line through the camp. The privates' tents were in three rows; those of the officers were in a street to the rear; and in the rear of them again, were the field officers', and those belonging to the staff, with the tent of the commanding general. A rear and a quarter guard were planted, similar to ours, but at a much greater distance.

The form of the tents is the same that used to be made in England many years ago, but which gave place to the more commodious shape now adopted. Their height is not more than four feet; however, the wood work is light and easy of conveyance. The men, in the great general Suwarroff's style, have no other paillasse than the earth and their military coats. Small bell tents are placed in pairs in front of each company, for the security of the arms, which are piled around its pole; and here they remain, if not wanted for use, day and night.

I do not approve this practice for many reasons. In the first place, the men are separated from their arms: a disunion which ought to be considered by the soldier as great a breach of his martial vows, as a similar parting from his lady would be of his matrimonial ones. Secondly, the uncertainty of the weather renders such a disposition very unfavourable to their being in a good state when they are really wanted. And thirdly, the separation takes from the soldier that religious attachment to his arms which is the best friend of his duty. Like the Roman's adherence to his shield, he ought to look upon the quitting his arms, and the loosing his life, as much the same thing. And lastly, in cases of surprise, or sudden summons, what confusion must arise from every man running to a particular spot to seize his weapons! A good soldier should be ever on the alert: and, sleeping with his hand on his musquet, his wedded wife and dear *brown Bess*, be ready at a moment's call to spring

upon his feet, and take her in his arms. That the pieces of the Russians might sustain injury by the tenting plan, is clear; but I must do them the justice to say that they take precautions against the evil; the locks being carefully cased, not only in their quarters, but often in the hands of the sentries.

At nine o'clock the whole line turned out, in their foraging caps and greatcoats, and without arms. The officers fell in two paces in front. The drums kept their station in the centre of each battalion. The band was in the rear. The retreat, or tattoo was beat. The band then played a sacred piece of music extremely solemn, which the stillnes of the evening additionally favoured. A signal was given by the commanding officer, when the whole became uncovered. A silence of a minute took place: it was a pause, so extremely still, as to create an expecting awe in the spectator; and it was broken by the softest, and I may say the most angelic breathings from the choral band, who, accompanied by the music, sung a delightful and simple hymn. During this, each soldier crossed himself with the utmost devotion; and the behaviour of the officers was not less devout. The scene was new to me, and differing widely from the closing of the day in a British camp. I must acknowledge I never witnessed a ceremony so impressive on the feelings, nor an address to the Deity so awful and sublime. As soon as the holy rite was finished, the men put on their caps, faced to the right, and were dismissed.

We passed the remainder of the evening with the prince, who gave us a very elegant supper, and treated us with a respect and attention which made a comparison the more extreme that I could not help drawing: I mean the immense distance at which personages of his rank hold even the officers serving under them. While we sat round the table, the subalterns and captains of his regiment stood at one end, and in that position partook of the repast. As it is the custom of the country, they did not appear humiliated; but enjoyed their share of the passing dishes with sufficient *gout* and good humour. Regiments, here, do not mess as we do in England; but every man eats his morsel alone: and frequently it is but a morsel; as the

scantiness of their pay will not admit a very ample provision. I may dine pleasantly with individuals of these northern corps; but nowhere amongst them can we find gay, social dinners, such as those I have enjoyed with you on the Bank-guard, or on that of St. James's.

I think, in one of my former letters, I animadverted on the tightened garments of the Russian soldiers. But at this encampment they seemed so much more excessive in their smallness, that I must needs reiterate my indignation against the abominable mode. Their waists are so pinched by clothes and a leathern belt, that part of their *inward man* must be dislodged from his original quarters, and forced, either up into the higher chest or down into their *lower one*. You will not find it difficult to understand what I mean by this appellation of the baser repository of the human machinery! I took my hint from the fair sex, whom I have frequently heard dignify with the name of a pain in the *chest*, any complaint from the throat down to the knee; and as with us the shape,

> Small by degrees, and beautifully less,
> From the full bosom to the slender waist,

is entirely appropriated to the ladies, you must not be surprised that I should denominate things according to their vocabulary, when I am writing of fashions which seem, by nature, attributable to them only. Knowing the bravery of the Russian officers, it *frets me* to see them case their manliness in such maidenly ligatures. Some carry it to such a pitch as to sport a waist of hardly more than a few inches in circumference. Indeed, so consequential do they think it, that when on my first arrival at St. Petersburgh I expressed my wonder at their unmartial shapes, I was told an anecdote that explained to me how they were formed.

Previous to the battle of Austerlitz, when the army marched out to join the Austrians, a female having occasion for art to support nature, applied to one of the first boddice-makers in the city for the requisite encirclements. But he frankly told her he could not obey her commands, having a large order then in hands, to follow the army which had just passed the

frontiers. I will not vouch for the veracity of this *histoire;* but I scarcely doubt it, as it cannot be possible to bring any shape, bad or good, into the form here in fashion, without compresses as strong as those which used to be drawn on the ladies of old by the help of their staymaker's foot.

On the sight of a Russian officer, what first strikes the eye of a stranger is his wasplike waist and enlarged thigh. The girded belt above, increases the swell of the limb, and the shortened coat displays the whole of its magnitude. Their high hats and feathers so overburden the slender adhesion of the body to the hip, that you only wonder the inadequate support does not break in twain. You may form some idea of the oddity of their appearance: but when you add to this feminine part of their toilet, their fierce and military countenances, the contrast is as strange as it is surprising. They allow their whiskers to grow to such length as to meet along the edge of their chin: the effect is terrific, giving a wild ferocity to their aspects. This Mars-like beard, with the immense breadth of their chests, is well calculated for war; and were it not for the absurd disproportion in their middles, I should say that, in all points, I never saw a nobler body of officers as well as men. They are all as erect as an arrow, and carry themselves with the most exact military attention.

I hope I may one day see these fine fellows dressed to the advantage of which their really excellent figures are capable; as I understand that the emperor, being informed of the inconveniencies of the present mode, and of its injurious effects on the health, intends speedily to issue an order to change this part of their uniform; and so, both for grace and utility, once more set the body at liberty.

Boots and loose pantaloons are in general use throughout the army. The climate forbids gaiters; and certainly in all cold countries, the former are preferable. Every private soldier wears a sword; but for what reason I could not learn, as they are never taught the use of one. A musquet and a good bayonet are all the weapons a foot soldier should carry. On them he should depend. More divides his attention, and is very apt to make him negligent of the whole.

I was much indebted to the Prince G—— for his politeness in explaining many objects of my military curiosity. Indeed the kindness that I have received from the most illustrious residents of this hospitable capital, is beyond my thanks: but they *used me after their own honour and dignity;* and so generous a consciousness must speak my sense of obligation. To the governor-general I am particularly indebted for a thousand marks of friendship: and one token of his esteem I shall ever preserve as an expressive emblem of his warm and cherishing heart. I mean a valuable pelisse, with which his excellency presented me the other day. That it was his gift, makes it estimable to me: but independent of that value with which my respect for his worth would have stampt a shoub of the commonest bear, had it come from him; this pelisse is of the rarest and most costly materials, being lined with the skins of *unborn lambs.* It is difficult to obtain them at any price, as they are cut from the side of their heaving mother, just at the moment preceding that which would have given them birth. There is something terribly shocking to humanity in this relation: and it makes one shudder to think that nature does not groan under man's wants only, but under his luxuries too.

The wool of these little victims is beautifully soft, and in small silky curls of a silvery grey. The skins are brought from Persia, Bucharia, and the Kalmuc territory. The vegetable lamb, which is said to grow between the Volga and the Don, has had the reputation of furnishing these furs (if so tender a material may be so called?) however, the imposition was not long believed; their less blameless origin is now too well known. From description, the plant called the vegetable-lamb (if any such there be!) has a coat resembling the wool in question, and used to be prepared by the natives where it grew, into warm clothing for themselves. But even this account is now discredited; as of all the travellers into those countries, none remember having ever seen this strange plant, or of knowing any one who had.

The Tartars, who vend the skin of the real lamb, still persist in declaring it to be a produce of the earth; but so rare, that they exact the most exhorbitant prices for a pelisse. And

that they make it rare, by very seldom applying the Cesarean operation to the innocent victims of their avarice, is a happy circumstance. By the story they invented to conceal their cruelty, human nature has the comfort of seeing that they are ashamed of it. Perhaps it is politic too; for certainly, in wearing the skins, it would be more pleasant to think that they were plucked from an herb, than from the panting side of a poor sacrificed animal.

Besides these rarities from Persia, the most valuable furs of a more redundant growth come from Siberia and the adjoining provinces. The black fox and sables are in the highest esteem; but all are extremely expensive, being used in every winter dress of the rich. There are other fine furs from the Kalmuc country. But for the bear, racoon, &c. which are brought in such quantities from America to England, you have them infinitely better in quality, and cheaper in price, than we can find those of their hairy brethern in Russia. It is a very mistaken idea that these defences from the cold are as reasonable in this country as they are necessary. A man may expend a very decent fortune upon the wardrobe of his wife and daughters, before he sees them properly be-furred for the winter.

This is rather a *mal-apropos* subject in the month of June! And for fear the doctrine of sympathies should be so strong with you as to throw your blood into a boil at the contemplation of such suffocating habiliments, I shall very wisely withdraw, before you consign me and my furs to a still hotter region! Adieu! Adieu!

LETTER XXV.

Mosco, June, 1806.

IT is now deep midsummer! Mosco, deserted by its most amiable inhabitants, has no charms for me. All are gone to their country seats, there to court the breezes until the season of frost and gaiety recals them to this social scene. What then have I to do in this place! You know I never was fond of the sentimental amusement of haunting places deserted by former joys. To me it is distracting; memory is too busy, regret too poignant, to allow your friend to sigh romantically over the walks of Mosco. I must off. For to me it is now a tomb; nay emptier than a tomb, for both the soul and body of what I best love, have left it. But, if Heaven grants me life, next winter hither shall I return; and then my indulgent correspondent, you shall have a few more records of the happy, thrice happy days, I pass in this ever dear city. When I entered it, little was I aware of the sentiments with which I quit it: sentiments, which give me a joy in all around; and an interest in every thing which belongs to the country that gave the object of them birth.

To-morrow I shall set out for St. Petersburgh, and in the course of a few days be so much the nearer you. That at least is some comfort in passing from the region which contains one dear friend, that I am approaching the confines of another. But only approaching! Many a sun and moon must roll over my head before I shake hands with you in England. Yet while writing thus, I almost feel myself close to you: and in our usual manner of recounting the events of the day to each other, shall draw in my chair, and tell you how admirably my sagacity has blessed me with a companion for to-morrow's travel, or *travail!* which you like; for, I am sure I shall have pains enough before I am delivered of my burthen.

Mr. B— and I had settled to keep the road together; he in his carriage and I in mine. That he is not the object of my present lamentations you can easily believe. But my evil stars brought an addition to our party, who I am now going to in-

troduce to you, merely by character; for I would sooner condemn myself to trudge with him from here to Jericho, than do such an injury to my friend as to present him in *propria persona.*

The Marquis de — is the gentleman. And the lesson I have learnt from the method in which this personage authorized himself to become one of our party will, during my continental tour and for ever after, teach me to be careful of suddenly saying YES; and of believing that all noblemen, are noble; and that smooth manners do not often conceal a very rugged heart. In short, my noviceship was most egregiously taken in by the titled Italian; and I fear from what I have seen, and more that I have heard, that I shall have no trifling reasons to increase my repentance for my over hasty *yea.* My Marquis, heaven knows! may be honest; but I am too feelingly convinced that he is poor. And yet that is no crime, as I can bear witness, who am myself, perhaps not many whits more worthy in that respect; and assuredly much poorer in the knowledge of making my way through the world. However the old adage *experientia &c.* will profit me a little.

The mode in which I became encumbered with this gentleman was, I must do him the justice to say, as much owing to my own folly as to his wisdom. As soon as he delivered his silver tongued wish; had I taken a moment's thought, he might as easily have been civilly answered in the negative, as most stupidly greeted with an assent. But, as I said before, my evil star ruled: and having been hailed by an angel on my arrival at Mosco, it was decreed as a small service to the city, that I should take a devil out of it. This said demon, who was fated to become my familiar, I had met at dinner at the Prince V—'s. He there learnt that I was shortly going to St. Petersburgh, and had a vacant place in my carriage. Presuming on the popular notion that every Englishman who is seen in a foreign country, must be *rich* and a *lord*, he surprised me next morning with a visit; and with many polite speeches conferred on me that honourable title. I soon undeceived him with regard to my right to the coronet, but with the utmost of my eloquence, I could not persuade him that my purse was not as full as he

seemed determined to think it. He had travelled, appeared intelligent, spoke several languages, possessed an excellent address, and in so easy a manner requested the favour of being allowed to be my companion to St. Petersburgh, that I instantly consented. In the first place, I was pleased with his conversation, as far as it went; it was agreeable to me to do a civility to any gentleman; and as he was a nobleman, and talked carelessly of expenses, I could not doubt that he had sufficient to pay his own.

But I was very green, my friend! and have to thank him for bringing my experience to so rapid a ripening. A few visits from my Marquis, added to some inquiries I made, soon told me how precipitate I had been: however information came too late; to retract was impossible; I must take him. In vain, I now see that his fund of intelligence is of similar extent with that of the Sharper in the Vicar of Wakefield, whose *cosmogony of the world* talked Moses Primrose out of his father's horse. My Marquis has talked me out of horses, and carriage, and patience into the bargain; and to-morrow, I must set him and all his estates, viz. his uniform and decorations! by my side for a long *tête-à-tête* of five or six days! I confess the blockhead part I acted in the affair deserves the punishment: and so being resigned to suffer for my folly, I shall bid you good night; promising to finish my letter at the first halting place.

Voskresensky, June 19th. Thursday night.

Well! Our disasters with my amiable companion are begun: but how they will end, I cannot guess. Perhaps conduct us back to the same prison we so lately explored, in a different style from our last visit. Indeed, my poor friend B—— and I have no contemptible chance, by the vagaries of our third, of being marched retrogradely, to make a happy triumvirate with the captive Pole. But you shall know all in order.

Having arranged every thing this morning for our journey, and made an agreement with the Istvostchicks for horses to Voskresensky, we were preparing to enter our carriages, when the postillions refused to touch the reins, saying the whole of

their fare had not been paid. Knowing to the contrary, we insisted on their mounting; they were obstinate: and turning to the marquis who could speak Russ, we requested him to express our remonstrances more plainly to the men than we had done. But applying at once to my *ci-devant* servant's argument, he started forward, and made such active use of a huge stick upon the backs of the poor devils, that he soon compelled them to seek refuge on their boxes.

Having brought them to their duty, we were just going to proceed, when a detention arose from his side. Though victor, he had not escaped quite clear; his shoulder knot and coat flap were nearly torn off in the scuffle, and hung dangling in a most pitiable plight. Undoubtedly his raiment was none of the newest; and in repairing the present fractures we perceived that they had not been the first: our Hector had been in civil wars before. Some way or other our servants got the gaping apertures stiched up; and at a little distance, I defy the best eyes to discover that his clothes look any thing the worse. He treated the accident with his usual *nonchalance;* "it was a trifle, an old coat!" True, for it was a uniform of the emperor Paul's; and consequently could not be very juvenile. However, all mishaps being remedied, we set forwards at about three o'clock.

We travelled very quietly for twenty-five versts, which brought us into the centre of a village, where the drivers stopped, we supposed merely to refresh the horses. But our heroes of the whip had been all this time chewing the cud of their flagellation; and seizing the moment for revenge, they began to take off the horses, declaring that they would not stir a step further. We stopped this *manœuvre*, holding the animals in the harness. This produced a violent altercation; ourselves, and the vociferous marquis, all talking at once; the drivers bawling their accusations, resolution, and even threats; our servants defending our cause with part of the villagers who, incensed by the representations of the drivers, poured on us the most abusive language; others, standing aghast, with their hatchets in their hands, as undecided how to act. In short, the disturbance was so great as to menace every thing tremen-

dous. "Let us send back to Mosco!" exclaimed I. "Let us send them to the devil!" exclaimed a thundering voice; and the marquis's cudgel was again raised: it was the opening of the temple of Janus; a general battle ensued. The scene was dreadful for a few minutes: but the club of our Hercules at length proved a talisman; for after a few ineffectual stands, with broken heads and maimed limbs, they all fled before it, and left us in quiet possession of our carriages and their cavalry. Mr. B—— took the place of his charioteer, and I took that of mine. The marquis placing himself in my vehicle, which was a barouche, assumed an attitude of most direful menace. He drew his sword, and waving and flourishing it in the air, in loud and broken Russ, vowed the death and slaughter of all who should attempt to impede our exit. Thus, driving our champion like the heroes of old, we set off full speed through the village, amid the scamperings of the poor peaceful inhabitants, and the astonished shouts of the rebellious drivers and the mass of boors whom they had drawn into their conspiracy.

The spot we now essayed to find was twenty-eight versts onward. Not one of us had ever been there, or knew any thing of its situation, only that it lay towards the north. Therefore, on the wide road we sallied; like true knights errant, to take our chance for a good or evil termination to our adventure. The impression our titled companion made on me, at the moment of our triumphal departure, I shall never forget; and as it was thoroughly *unique*, I cannot forbear presenting you with so singular a curiosity.

Monsieur le marquis de —— is about forty-five; pale, dark, and lank visaged; his hair sable, somewhat grizzled; his person gaunt, with an inequality in his right hip, which gives to his motion a rather grotesque combination of the crab and a man. The Knight of La Mancha is exquisitely pourtrayed in his face and figure; but there the resemblance halts, as he has not a thought in any degree comparative with the mental part of the Spanish hero. But for a spirit of inflicting buffets, and brandishing his death denouncing blade, you have already seen that our drivers did not fall short, in blows, of any of the un-

fortunates who came under the flaying steel of the renowned Don Quixote.

After wandering about for a long time, driving hither and thither without a direction, at last (having gone more than six or seven versts on a wrong track) we arrived at Voskresensky late in the evening. Being lucky enough to find a civil host and comfortable house (a precious sight in a Russian village!) I have ventured to take this epistle from my letter-case, without any fear of adding to its blots, the less agreeable ones of grease and dirt. I am scribbling on a very clean table; and as I know not when I may be so well appointed again, I might be tempted to go on; but not being at all certain into what sea of troubles our doughty pilot may yet steer us, I will not finish my letter till we come to the end of our journey.

We came thus far out of the direct road to St. Petersburgh, to visit the celebrated monastery of the Resurrection, otherwise called the New Jerusalem, which was founded by Nichon the patriarch, and his residence for many years. We shall remain at our *hotel* to-night; and intending to set off to-morrow morning at six o'clock to view the temple, shall, now having brought ourselves and sticks and staves to a good rest, wish you the same, till I address you again from our next sleeping place.

Friday Evening. Voskresensky.

Being just returned from our pilgrimage to the Holy Land; before a storm which is now brewing, sweeps off the vividness of my impressions, according to my promise, I will transmit them to paper.

The monastery of the venerable patriarch externally resembles other great religious establishments of this country. Its walls are strongly castellated, guarded by high warlike towers and military bulwarks. It covers a vast extent of ground, in the centre of which stands the grand and celebrated church called the New Jerusalem, built by Nichon in imitation of the Holy Sepulchre in Palestine: so determined was he to be exact to his model, that he sent an Italian architect to Jerusalem to bring away a plan of the sepulchre in all its parts.

During our walk around the walls, we fortunately encountered the archimandrite (or abbot) who accosted us with politeness; and afterwards showed us an attention that was quite unexampled. We should have thought a man of his ecclesiastical dignity sufficiently condescending, had he sent one of the monks to usher us over the edifice; but he, in the most gracious manner, took the task on himself; and conducted us throughout the whole of the monastery, not omitting the smallest point which contained any object of interest.

In the great building are more than forty chapels, consecrated to the apostles, John the Baptist, saints, patriarchs, and other pious persons who were venerated in the original church of the Sepulchre. To these are added oratories dedicated to the canonized of Russia, St. Alexander Nefsky, &c. As the convent bears the appellation of New Jerusalem, the villages, hills, and country around, have likewise assumed the names of Palestine. Here I saw the mounts Carmel and Tabor, the sea of Galilee, the Jordan, the village Emaus, &c. &c.

Our pious conductor, who pointed out these scenes with religious awe, was about thirty-two or three. His remarks showed him to be a man of extensive knowledge. Indeed, when he mentioned the school in which he had been, a place so well adapted for the planting and cultivation of all that improves the heart and mind, I no longer was surprised at his courtesy and accomplishments: he had passed several years in the *Troitza* with the learned and saintlike Platon. As we conversed, I found him intimately acquainted with the religious literature of the passed centuries, as well as thoroughly master of the classics, and of every species of reading that can enlighten and adorn the understanding. He was also well read in our English writers; and spoke with particular praise of Sherlock and Porteus, of Dr. Young and Cowper.

He led us into a spacious tower that overlooked one of the rivers, the banks of which were richly shaded with trees. "This," said he, "is the house of David, whence he beheld the beautiful Bathsheba bathing: and those are the gardens of Uriah."

This was rather an odd point in the good monarch's history for monks to celebrate. Yet I do not think it amiss: for, as the New Testament holds up an example of sinless perfection; in the Old, we have one that transgressed, and yet was approved of Heaven. Not that we are to copy the sin as we ought the virtue; but by considering the character of David, we may be cured of despair and vice at the same moment. The king of Israel is declared to be *a man after God's own heart:* not when he was in his sins; not when he took Bathsheba to his arms and slew her husband: but when he acknowledged the justice of Nathan's sentence, and humbled himself with remorse in dust and ashes. I have often wondered at hearing people of any reflection find fault with the holy epithets which the inspired writings give to David; and always bring up these two events of his life in support of their argument. All seem to remember that he sinned, but none that he repented; and it was his repentance that gained him the title of *the servant of the Lord.* The scripture account of this monarch, instead of being considered with captious remark, is, next to the gospel, the most gracious history that ever was revealed to man; for it declares, that though the sins of a man be red as scarlet, by repentance they shall be washed white as snow: and thus, this promised mercy of God is made evident by the example of David. Having so lately been in the company of the saintly abbot, you will not be surprised that I have caught a little of the spirit of sermonising. But in truth, when the stumbling block attached to the character of the "sweet songster of Israel" fell in my path, I could not, with a safe conscience, pass by, without putting forth my feeble hand to take it out of the way.

The monks of this foundation are thirty-two. All habited in black stuff, formed like the robes of the secular priests. They wear on their heads a sort of bonnet covered with a capuchin falling down their backs and terminating in two points. The archimandrite was clad in silk, with the badge of some sacred order suspended from his neck. St. Basil, as usual in this country, rules these dedicated people.

We were next conducted into a library of some extent. But what would have been its principal treasure, the curious and

valuable manuscripts collected by Nichon during his supremacy, are now, I believe, in the emperor's possession. None are here. Two relics were shown to us; one, a history of the world written in the patriarch's own hand, and the other a copy of the sacred scriptures with his revisions and remarks. We saw several large portraits of this extraordinary man: but from the style, I doubt their being likenesses. Our hospitable conductor now led us into his own apartments, where we took refreshments of coffee, &c. before he attended us to the interior and environs of the building.

We passed out at a little gothic gate, and shaped our course along the foot of the embattled walls, and through a romantic wood, gradually descending the hill on which the New Jerusalem towered above us. We soon found ourselves on an extensive plain beautifully enriched with trees, and watered by the Jordan and Euphrates. To be sure the latter river has made rather a jump from the plains of Babylon to meet the Judean flood under the walls of this monastery. But if its patriarch could bring the Jordan from its native springs so far, it required very little more stretch of power to transport the Euphrates also; and he was very right to fulfil all his wishes while he was about it. Here then flowed the two famous rivers of Palestine and Assyria; and though in miniature, the effect was fine and solemn. The convent rose majestically amidst the thick umbrage of the wood; and its golden domes and high minarets shone in religious magnificence from that commanding spot. My sketch will give you a slight idea of its bold and interesting situation: and for your sake, as well as my own, I cannot but lament that I have not the pencil of a Loutherbourgh or a Wilson, more sublimely to pourtray the grand objects of this country.

After dwelling for some time on its extent and grandeur, and on the associating ideas which ought to present themselves on this consecrated place; our pious abbot conducted us through another avenue in the wood to a little white building embosomed amid drooping larches; trees whose heads towered far above the minarets of the Hermitage: for so this retreat was named. In this secluded spot did the austere

Nichon spend most of the days in twenty years: not days of greatness and of splendor; they, like Wolsey's, had passed away: but days of silence, solitude, and voluntary punishment. Here he led a life of pains and fatigues, inflicting on himself the severest penalties for the offences of the past. When we recal this man's capacious mind, with the magnitude of his plans, and the strength of his understanding, we are struck with wonder that all this reason should become the slave of superstition. Is it possible that he who copied out the scriptures with his own hand, and commented on their contents, could see any utility to the soul in whips and scourges? But so the fact was. And I saw one instance, that proved he did not inflict this penitential chastisement with a sparing hand. It was an immense iron chain, of a weight so enormous as is hardly credible; to which was suspended a huge cross of the same ponderous metal. This terrible load he always wore during his fasts and humiliations, hanging from his neck. His bed consisted of a single stone, with one of a smaller size for a pillow: both were fixed in a low and confined cell. In the Hermitage are two small chapels. The staircase leading to them is spiral, and so narrow, that with difficulty one person can squeeze up at a time.

Our friend the abbot told us that the patriarch did not always dwell here; but at the short intervals between the long fasts and other penitential periods, resided in the monastery. On the commencement of the fasts he returned hither again; and they saw no more of him till the time expired; and then he reappeared; exhausted and worn with watching and penance, but uttering no uneasiness for aught but, what he termed, his inexpiable offences. Can we imagine a more pitiable state of mind?

Immediately after Nichon's abdication of his rank of father of the Russian church, in 1658, he retired to this his favourite place of New Jerusalem. He remained here until the machinations of his enemies caused him to be removed to the convent of Therapont, in the cells of which he suffered the most rigorous treatment. However, with the death of the tzar Alexey Michaelovitch ceased his imprisonment; and he gained

the imperial permission to pass the rest of his days in this hermitage. Unfortunately he never had the comfort of seeing so dear a spot again, which, though watered by his tears, was yet the place he had consecrated to the Deity, and where he found consolation in pouring out his soul in penitence and prayer. He died on the road in the year 1684. But his remains were brought to the monastery, and buried with due solemnity in one of the chapels of the great church. His tomb is covered with dark velvet; and over it hangs the chain and cross I have already described. A very fit emblem of the more iron bonds his mistaken judgment had laid upon his reason and his life.

Having performed the whole of our pilgrimage, and even ended it at the shrine of the patriarch, we bid a grateful adieu to the archimandrite our attentive conductor; and returned to our village, proposing immediately to press forward towards St. Petersburgh.

Monday, June 23d.

We proposed, my good friend; but alas! during the visit to New Jerusalem, our characters had travelled after us from the last stage; and not a man nor a horse was allowed to approach our carriages. Boors had arrived, who gave such a terrific account of our behaviour, positively affirming that the postillions were dead of the wounds we had inflicted on them; and that others of the broken headed villagers were in an expiring state. In short the story spread so widely, and was believed so currently, that all Voskresensky threatened to rise at once and rid the world of such tyrants. Indeed the business became so serious immediately after I last closed this paper, and finding it impossible to appease the clamour, or secure ourselves any other way, we literally fortified our abode; and placed regular watches for four days and nights, until a courier could return, who, on this danger, we had sent express to the governor-general at Mosco for redress.

After a most inconvenient suspense of another twenty-four hours, our messenger arrived with credentials, investing us with full authority to command all we required; and what was

not the least agreeable part of his embassy, he brought along with him the very drivers whom report had murdered. His excellency had given orders that he should take them up in his way: and after having seen them receive an additional disciplining from the police, for their behaviour, they were made to declare their penitence at our feet.

The sight of the governor's order, and the appearance of the postillions, immediately quieted the villagers; and mounting our carriages, we left Voskresensky, drawn by the very horses with which we had entered, and driven by our late rebellious charioteers, now all attention and obsequiousness.

Barouche, Tuesday, &c. &c.

Determining to make up for lost time, we soon got into the high road, and bowled along as swiftly as if we had had Pegasus himself yoked to our car. I travelled this very road but a few months ago. In vain I now look round to recognise any object of my former observations: it seems totally a new scene. When I last beheld it, it was covered with snow; now, all is one wide stretch of green landscape. The one showed Winter in his direst reign; the other Summer, though I am sorry to say, not in her sweetest charms. All is flat and uninteresting. The villages boast no little spots cultivated with Swiss beauty and comfort. No tree, or creeping tendril grows near the doors and windows of these habitations. The russet cottages of England, overgrown with the blushing rose and fragrant honey-suckle; their pretty gardens, and domesticated animals, all are wanting here. The absence of the snow, and the unveiling of the grass, seem the only marks that winter has disappeared: at least the only pleasing assurance, for as to disagreeable proofs, in the forms of heat and dust, we have enough of them. A burning sun continually over our heads, scorching our very souls; and the dust, by way of soothing our pride, while it torments our skin, eyes, and lungs, makes us, like so many Eneases, always move in a cloud!

The natives are no less sensible of the heat than we Englishmen. They change the fashion and the substance of their

dress with the season: and as I have already pictured their winter costume, I shall now give you a sketch of their summer attire. The men go with naked feet, seldom any covering on their head, and literally wear nothing more than a shirt and trowsers of striped linen. The shirt is closed at the neck in a peculiar manner, with a round buckle precisely like the clasp used by the ancients. These people are particularly fond of children; a proof, I think, of the natural goodness of their hearts. You will more frequently see the men, when returning from toil, taking their infants in their arms and caressing them, than seeking the company of their wives. The women during the warm season, wear a blue and yellow dress of dyed linen, closed down the front with buttons, and fastened on the shoulders with clasps. It is called a serrafan. Their heads are usually bound with handkerchiefs of various colors: and when more gay, a bandeau of gold lace and beads encircles their foreheads. The hair is brought to knot on the top of the head, and its back part is ornamented with a fanciful sort of network, tassels and fringe of bugles, glass beads and different colored silks or worsted, resembling the decoration which the American chiefs wear in the place of a Highland Scot's *philabeg*. I inclose you drawings of these lightly attired males and females.

But while I am on the subject, I cannot omit mentioning a strange custom which they have amongst them; one very repugnant to nature, and to British feelings even shocking to think on. Fathers marry their sons to some blooming girl in the village at a very early age, and then send the young men either to Mosco or St. Petersburgh to seek employment, leaving their brides a few days after their marriage to the care of their parents. At the expiration of some years, when the son returns to his cottage, he finds himself the nominal father of several children, the offspring of his own parent! who had deemed it his duty thus to supply the place of a husband to the young wife. This is done all over Russia, and is never considered a hardship by the parties. Indeed so far from it, the fashion continues; and when the son becomes a resident in his native village, if he have a numerous stock thus raised to

him, he marries them off, sends them a packing; and then enjoys himself, like a Turk in his seraglio, amongst their wives.

Whether this horrid, unnatural, and immoral custom arose from any policy in the nobles, who might issue an order to this effect, to compensate to themselves for perhaps some great mortality amongst their young serfs in the case of long and destructive wars, I cannot tell; but I think it very likely, as no propensity in nature could ever dictate so abominable a perversion of nature. As it is the interest of the owner of slaves to increase their population, it is also to his advantage to allow of the emigration of the young men to the cities as much as possible; for, as he receives an annual pecuniary acknowledgment from all who leave his village to pursue their own plans, in proportion as they amass money, he may raise the rent they pay him for themselves; and so improve his revenue by their fortune. On these grounds, I suppose the horrid practice I have just mentioned, is permitted to pass uncensured. The nobleman finds his lands stocked with a growing generation of slaves, and he cares not by what means they were planted. This absorbing passion of self-interest, how does it possess the whole world;—how does it even alloy natures which otherwise might not be far from heaven! There exists an old law, happily now absolete, which empowered the proprietor of a slave, not only to receive his yearly rent, but on any pretence, to seize the harvest of his industry. Such is not tolerated now: on the reverse, a part of the hard earned riches of the serf is appropriated to purchase his freedom. Many of these industrious vassals are possessed of wealth to the amount of 30,000*l.*, and sometimes more.

The country, for the greater part of the way, now became very woody; and after travelling over the first hundred versts from Moscо, like passing through the first village, the facsimile of all the rest, the monotony was so unbroken that I might safely have slept the remainder of my journey without missing any very interesting view. Near Valdaia the ground certainly rises a little, gives you a few undulations which, like a flattering ripple on the sea, seems to promise something

stronger, but smooths again. All the varieties we met, were here and there a marsh in which a huge piece of granite reared its head, and a few passing groups of natives driving their merchandize to distant markets.

Amongst our scanty complement of entertainment (for our titled companion having gained his point, and perhaps exhausted his powers in the last affray, very sagaciously sought to replenish them with the sweet interchange of food and sleep), the canal and falls of Borovitsky struck across our recollection. B—— and I being pretty well wearied of our dull drive, determined to visit them, and ordered the postillions accordingly.

At Vislina Valochock the canal is first descried, laden with vessels full of productions from the interior; human industry having here united the river Twertza with the Meutza; connecting, by an inland navigation, the Caspian with the Baltic Sea. We inquired whether there were any barks collected at the falls, in one of which we might descend; and being answered in the affirmative, we hired horses to take us to these torrents, and afterwards bring us round to the great road at Valdaia. The circuit we made by this *detour*, might be about a hundred and seventy versts. On reaching Speckinskoy, the prestan (or port), we despatched our vehicles to Borovitsky.

We found numbers of craft on the eve of going down, and placing ourselves in one of them, soon entered on the descent, which was by no means tremendous, although the rapidity of the motion was surprising. This torrent is a long inclining surface of water of about thirty versts: and to give you an idea of the velocity with which the barks moved, we went twenty-five versts in three quarters of an hour. The most alarming circumstance in the exploit, is to see the constant changes the vessels make in their shapes from the violence of the waters. They bend like paper, and are so admirably constructed, as to take the undulating form of the rising wave. Were they of firmer texture they must inevitably be dashed to pieces. As it is, they bound like a feather on the water, and are carried by its impetuosity safely to the bottom of the fall. With all this, it requires some nerve to make the excursion; yet by no

means so much as to shoot London bridge before an ebb tide.

Around this place the country assumes a more interesting air; and independent of the canal, very well repaid us for the sweep we had taken to approach it. The remainder of the road from Borovitsky to Valdaia, is by no means unpicturesque, and gradually becomes more so as we advance to the Valdaia hills and lake. The banks of this piece of water are unquestionably beautiful; and the centre is not less charming, being magnificently adorned with a fine island containing a monastery.

As we drove along, peeping into every copse, dingle, and alley green of the glowing landscape, I was much pleased with the numerous bands of Ukrane peasants and their droves, as they crossed our path. At night their appearance was still more picturesque. Formed into little circles, in various attitudes, around a rustic fire which they had lighted on the earth, they would sit and sing, while their cattle grazed amongst the herbage of the trees. There was something very cheerful in these midnight groups; and we were not sorry to find, that as they were travelling to St. Petersburgh, we should have this moving scenery the whole way.

Another species of itinerant picturesque, but in smaller herds, occurred. They are called Gypsies with you, but here, and generally over the continent, they are known by the appellation of Bohemians. The wives of this strange race, whose origin is so uncertain, are celebrated for their extraordinary mode of dancing and singing. Many little colonies of them are established near Mosco, whence they occasionally visit the city, and are hired by the nobility to add to the amusements of the evening. It is pleasing to observe the comfort, ease, and regularity with which they transport themselves from place to place. They have excellent tents to pitch at the time of rest, and the cradles in which the camp furniture is conveyed, form good beds. We passed many of their canvass villages, the disposition of which was wild and Arabic to the most romantic degree; and the inhabitants, employed in sundry domestic and culinary

concerns, presented the most interesting scenes, either for the pencil or the heart.

The children who ran by the side of our carriage, were extremely beautiful, as the eastern character was finely marked in their countenance, besides their copper complexions, raven hair, and large black eyes. Beards and mustachios increased the ferocious looks of the men, as well as did the wide caftan and Asiatic cap. But there was majesty blended with this fierceness; a something that strongly declared their consciousness of independence: and, when you viewed their strength, their air, and the fearless penetration of their glances; and united with these, their probable wants, the result produced sensations not very favourable to the idea of falling in with them in the depth of night. However, I believe that any alarm of the sort would be groundless; as I understand their depredations seldom extend beyond a stray lamb from the farmer's flock, and a few poultry; or any other thing calculated to supply their uncertain meals. The women devote their wits to reading the hands of the village lasses, and gather a copeek or two as their reward.

There is something very extraordinary in these wandering people; and an obscurity envelopes their origin that appears almost impossible to penetrate. That they are called Gypsies, we are told in England, arises from a tradition of their springing from Egypt. How then do they derive the name of Bohemians; which it seems they bear over almost all the continent? They show no resemblance to the present natives of Bohemia: neither are their features in the least like those of the real Egyptians. Will you allow me to form a conjecture respecting them? And when delivered, if you think my antiquarianism as bad as Martinus Scriblerus's blue rusted shield, laugh and welcome; I am ready enough to surrender my doctor's cap, and join most heartily in your mirth.

That they came originally from the East, I do not doubt; their complexion, dancing girls, customs, and Bedouin way of life, affirm the same. Their wide dispersion, throughout the whole of the known world, declares them to have been a persecuted people. There are none whom they resemble in this

latter respect but the Jews: and it is from the Jews that I date them. Now do not make an outcry at this, but hear me to the end, and you shall see how I will prove it anon. Memory! Memory! She is apt to play me many a jade's trick, and now she threatens to throw me again! But I have somewhere read (I think it was in a large work, of several folio volumes on the different religions) of a great dispersion of the Jews which took place immediately on the sacking of the Holy City by the Romans. Part fled into Egypt; and from thence as they increased in population, subdivided again, and wandered into other countries; living separate from the people of the nations they visited, but subsisting by an affected power of foretelling future events.

Does not this description tally with the present vocation of the Gypsies? Do not the symmetry of features, hair, complexion, and eyes, of these itinerant tribes, all agree with the peculiar aspects of the sons of Israel? And beyond these evidences, if you require internal as well as external; is not the obstinacy with which they adhere to their own customs, and keep themselves distinct from the governments of the countries in which they sojourn, the very spirit of the Jews? The Jews are a separate people in every nation: and who at all resemble them in this respect but the Gypsies? I therefore consider them as one and the same race originally. But since their emigrating from Egypt, their first place of refuge (whence foreign nations gave them the name of Egyptians, or Gypsies), it is likely to suppose that many persons whom desperate fortunes or persecution might make homeless, would attach themselves to these free though houseless tribes. Hence would gradually arise that improvement in their posterity which now renders them in stature and expression a finer people than the modern Jews. Length of time, and wide dispersion, with their unsettled mode of life, by degrees taking from them all exercise of the rites of their religion; we can easily comprehend how, in the progress of a few centuries, the marking points should be forgotten by them; and that they should feel no repugnance to marrying with the strangers who joined their bands; or to admit adventurers of all persuasions into their fraternity.

From a reason of this kind, I account for their continental name of Bohemians. During the terrible persecution of the christians in the tenth century, under Boleslaus the Cruel, who expelled them Bohemia, many were driven from their native homes to perish amid the trackless forests of Poland, Germany, and Russia. Travellers could nowhere go without meeting hordes of these unhappy people, sitting by the road sides, and feeding themselves and children on the wild pulse. Sometimes they moved in larger bodies, and sometimes in less; everywhere overspreading the countries in such multitudes, as to cause every itinerant group that appeared to be supposed Bohemian. Hence the fewer tribes of Gypsies were confounded in the general swarm, and called Bohemians.

In a succeeding and more happy period the greater number of the persecuted christians were recalled to their country by the pious successor of the tyrant of Bohemia: but some of them, preferring even a necessitous liberty to a chance of similar suffering, most likely would join themselves with the Gypsies, now called by their appellation; and so, though independent of their country, these adventurers found themselves acknowledged as Bohemians still. Less innocent associates, outlaws from their nations, might insinuate themselves amongst the hordes; perverting the original blamelessness of the poor wandering Israelites, and so initiating them into the several accomplishments of cheating, stealing, &c.

So far my hypothesis regarding the Gypsies: and for fear you should be more wearied than edified by my researches after their pedigree, I shall make some little compensation by sending a portrait of one of the fair belonging to this brown people. The face is an exact copy from a very handsome propheteas of their tribe, who stood by the carriage side. The dress, which is just as she wore it, will strike you with its resemblance to the drapery of a Roman toga.

I have learned to write in my barouche. So you will not be surprised to find me exclaim, St. Petersburgh is in sight! In a few hours, I shall be relieved from my *noble* companion; and this, almost measureless epistle, shall be despatched to you by your very faithful friend.

LETTER XXVI.

St. Petersburgh, July, 1806.

ON my arrival in St. Petersburgh I found our ambassador, lord G. L. Gower, preparing for his departure. He soon after bade Russia adieu, leaving his secretary of legation, Mr. Stuart, as acting minister until the coming out of his successor. During this interval, the expiration of the treaty of commerce approached; and the renewal of it will remain to be obtained by the expected representative of his Britannic Majesty. At present the Russian government are silent on the subject; but doubts are entertained of its being granted, or if granted, with very circumscribed privileges.

I found the city, on this my second entrance, rather to lose in comparison with the brilliant and festive Mosco. The summer had robbed it also of its principal inhabitants. However, what friends I met, yet lingering amidst its sultry streets, received me with their usual cordial welcome. Several, who were detained in their residence by different interests, regretted the present dulness even more than I; but as a kind of fairy favour, the *name-day* of the empress dowager came its annual round, and promised us some gay hours in those dedicated to its celebration. I think I mentioned before that the day of the saint who bears the same name with individuals of the Greek church, is always greeted by the person so christened, with entertainments suited to their rank.

The palace of Peterhoff and its gardens were to be the scene of the empress's *fête*. Vast crowds flocked towards the capital to witness the ceremony; and many thousands of all descriptions assembled in the gardens. The common people, by a gracious condescension of the imperial family, are admitted to a certain length, to share in all the grand festivities. And while the multitude thus roamed about, enjoying, in their minds, a paradise on earth, the court remained in the palace, amusing themselves from the windows with the passing groups. Every thing around spoke the magnificence of the hand that designed

the whole. Nothing could surpass the illuminations. Walks of not less than five or six miles, in various directions, bordered by fine trees, and carpeted with flowers of every hue and fragrance, were fantastically and brilliantly hung with millions of lamps. Temples blazing in light, as if constructed of myriads of precious stones, rubies, sapphires, topazes, and emeralds, darted their prismatic beams from a hundred openings in the shade.

Fountains, not to be equalled but at Versailles, played in every part of the gardens; throwing up their waters to an amazing height, and receiving them again, in basons of white marble decorated with gilded statues of the gods and water nymphs, whose bodies glittered through this shower of falling diamonds, like the lustrous forms of Amphitrite and her train, so beautifully described by our favourite Fenelon. In front of the palace a rapid torrent rolled down a flight of high granite steps. Having rows of lamps placed at the base of each, the rushing stream sparkled as it fled over the radiant platform; producing an admirable and marvellous effect, from the tremulous velocity of the water. In short, it appeared a work of enchantment; being more like a cataract of the brightest flame, than a fall of the colder element.

Light was here lavished; above, around, below, all was one continued blaze: for the numerous lakes in the grounds, reflecting the constellation of lamps, so bewildered the sight, that every step towards their margin seemed to announce a burning abyss, and threaten a rather Tartarean bath in the doubled fires. As water nymphs were placed in the fountains, I think a Pluto carrying off the lovely Proserpine through these glowing waves, would have added no inconsiderable interest to the scene. There were many bearded Russians present, who might have stood very aptly for *gloomy Dis;* but for the *fair flower* he *gathered,* he must have looked for it across the threshold of the palace, as, I repeat, the merchant dames have no pretensions to any of that beauty which charmed the royal ravisher of Enna.

From the day having been previously rainy, and continuing cloudy, the night was extremely dark, which gloom, instead of

being an inconvenience, gave more effect to the splendor of the scene; producing, to people who viewed it from a distance, the appearance of the conflagration of a great city. We had also a prospect from the palace, not less magnificent: the ships of war on the gulf being illuminated from the masthead to every part of the rigging, their shapes thus brilliantly defined were distinctly seen, when opposed to the black waters on which they rode.

The imperial mansion, as usual on these occasions, contained the court, and the party honoured with an invitation. The whole of the family was present. And jewels, splendid dresses, ribbons, stars, crosses, the orders of all nations, with the delicacy and graces of the ladies, formed a curious contrast to the shaggy traffickers and their waxen wives. The young empress looked like a divinity; and being in a *state of maternal solicitude*, an additional tender charm was given to her appearance. The august lady of the day moved about with the mien and benignity of a Minerva; and, by her smiles, dispensed a cheerfulness which awaked pleasure, while it chastised all ruder mirth.

During this charming evening, while every pleasing circumstance recalled to me dearer hours passed in Mosco at the like festivities, my eye was suddenly arrested by one, whom, to have seen once, it was impossible not to recognise amongst a thousand; and as I had seen him often, and not only admired him as a hero, but had experienced sufficient of his amiableness to revere him as a man, I sprung forward with joy to greet the prince Bagration. Mosco had introduced me to him. Every heartfelt recollection which that place suggested, was, no doubt, painted in my face, and distinctly spoke the delight of this rencontre; for he returned the grasp of my hand with the most gracious warmth: and for awhile, during the short conversation which the admiring throng around him would allow me to enjoy, I believed myself once more in the ancient capital, surrounded by all my wishes. So strong is the power of association! At eleven o'clock the court supper was spread: and before two o'clock most of the visitors retired.

I took up my rest on the Peterhoff road, at the house of a

British merchant, who had kindly invited me, these to forget the garish splendors of the night in a downbed, and a chamber of true English comfort. Indeed, were I to particularize by name, each individual of our countrymen settled here, who has showed me attention, I should give a list of them all; so warmly hospitable, so universally friendly have they been. I am hardly less indebted to the German gentlemen established at St. Petersburgh, who have even vied with each other in evincing, by kindness to me, their esteem for an Englishman.

To us, who regard our merchants as the pillars of our country, it is surprising to see the prejudices of the Russian nobility against the mercantile profession. Indeed all professions, excepting arms, are held in sovereign contempt by this lofty order of men. None but slaves, or persons derived from that race, ever in Russia become merchants, physicians, &c. &c. Hence it is very difficult for nobles, who have never been beyond the empire, to be made to understand that all those vocations are often filled, in England, by persons related to the best families. So far is the distinction carried, that a merchant, of whatever wealth, is not allowed to travel with more than three horses on the road, and two in the city. A noble never drives less than four, and frequently six. However, notwithstanding this general prejudice, I have sometimes met with a few (but very rarely) of both sexes of the Russian *noblesse* at the houses of our merchants: but they have always been persons of an extraordinarily enlarged mind, rendered still more liberal by travelling, and probably a residence in England.

Having some business at the admiralty, I returned to town early next morning. This public edifice is one of the most extensive in St. Petersburgh. It was planned and built by Peter the Great. At present, the architecture is not very striking; but it is undergoing alterations, which, we hope, will render it worthy of the navy of which it is the head. It stands on the banks of the Neva; and divides the English quay from that of the winter palace. The docks are large; and sufficiently numerous for the construction of four firstrate ships of war, besides frigates, and smaller vessels. One, in dock, of one hundred and thirty guns, is nearly completed; and is of the most excel-

lent workmanship. It is built under the superintendance of Monsieur le Brun; who has transferred himself from the Ottoman to the Russian service. Ships of this magnitude, when they are launched, proceed with ballast to Cronstadt, where they take in their guns, are rigged, and fully appointed for sea.

The mouth of the Neva is rendered very shallow by the shoals; consequently, ships drawing so much water as these firstrates of necessity do, can only clear it by artificial means. The camel, an ingeniously constructed machine, is the invention to which the mariners resort. It was the fruit of a Dutchman's genius, Mr. Bakker, a burgomaster of Amsterdam, who, in the year 1690, constructed it for the purpose of raising vessels over the Pampus, a passage between two sandbanks in the mouth of the Amsterdam river. The machine consists of two half ships, built in such a manner that they can be applied, below water, to each side of the hull of a large vessel. On the deck of these half ships, which form the camel (called so from its being used to *bear*), there are a great many horizontal windlasses, from which ropes proceed through one moiety of the *camel*, and being carried under the keel of the vessel, enter similar apertures in the other, from which they are conveyed to the windlasses on its deck. When the machines are to be used, as much water as may be necessary is suffered to run into them; all the ropes are cast loose; the vessel is conducted between the two parts; and large beams are placed horizontally through the portholes, with their ends resting on the camel, which is on each side. When the ropes are made fast, so that the ship is secured betwixt its supporters, the water is pumped from the machine, and it raises the ship along with it. Each half of the camel is generally one hundred and twenty seven feet in length; the breadth at the one end twenty two feet; and, at the other, thirteen. The hold is divided into several compartments, that it may be kept in equipoise while the water is flowing into it. A vessel that draws fifteen feet of water can, by the help of this machine, be made to draw only eleven: and the heaviest ships of war, of ninety or a hundred guns, can be so much lightened as to pass over the sandbanks without obstruction. However, it is found, that when the camel is applied to any ves-

sels belonging to the navy, they unavoidably sustain some injury; as it is observed that the parts of a ship which has been raised in this way, are always so strained, as never afterwards to allow of being closely shut. The principle on which the machine acts is that of specific gravity.

The tzar Peter founded this naval yard before Cronstadt was in a state to commence marine works: and to render it secure, he fortified the whole with a wet ditch; flanked the curtain with earthen bastions; and threw up strong defences towards the river. However, all this ancient labour is now to be levelled, to make way for an edifice more consonant with the magnificence of the city, and more worthy the character of so great an empire. Admiral Tchichacoff showed me the elevation of the *façade;* and certainly it is a fine specimen of the talents of the architect, who is a Russian.

The pictures of mine, which the Emperor did me the honour to approve of, being dedicated to the embellishment of the newly planned admiralty, are to be placed in the great council chamber, as soon as that superb saloon is rebuilt. Its design is magnificent; and as the efforts of my pencil are to cover the walls, I shall give you an idea of what I at present intend it shall celebrate. As I proceed, you will see that the frames of my pictures, or rather their envelopements, are to be of the most princely materials. A large full length portrait of the immortal Peter is to be placed at the upper end of this state apartment, under a rich canopy of crimson velvet and gold, draperied in regal style, and surmounted with every insignia of the imperial dignity. I am now painting on this picture. It is ten feet by seven and a half. I represent my illustrious subject surrounded by naval and military trophies. He rests his right hand upon an anchor, also holding in the same charts of the Caspian and Black Seas; on the waves of which he was anxious to see the fleets he was then projecting, command. He lived to be a victor there, and to carry his ships, not only as conquerors but as benefactors, to the neighbouring shores. At his feet lie the colours of his great northern rival, whose fortune he made stoop on the dreadful day of Pultowa; and over his head waves the imperial flag of his marine. The back ground is a view of

Cronstadt, with fleets of men of war and merchant ships, to show the progress of arms and commerce under his cherishing auspices.

On each side are to be placed two pictures of eight feet by seven: one, the emperor saving the lives of a boat's crew who were perishing in the lake Ladoga: the other his imperial majesty's naval victory over admiral Ehrenshield. The remaining subjects I have not considered; but the ceiling of the council chamber, which has a circle of twenty five feet in diameter, is left entirely to my own suggestions. I propose filling it with a design emblematic of Peter calling the empire into existence. The arts, commerce, war, peace, religion, all in their most perfect states, shall be introduced as bursting forth before the genius of this immortal prince. My other subjects will principally relate to the most eminent acts of his all glorious life; and so, when finished, if deemed worthy of their hero, they will not unaptly be called the glories of Peter the Great. Painting, like poetry, recals the past; and if the epic poem teaches true greatness by describing it, why may not the historic picture inculcate the same, by showing, even to the eye, examples of the virtue? Such use of the arts ennobles them, and very properly places the muses amongst the gods.

Independent of the impression which this sublime Monarch's character has made on my mind, of what must have been the outward lineaments of such a glorious being? To make my premeditated portrait as faithful as is possible (the bright original having passed into other worlds), I have occupied myself in collecting every information extant relative to his face and person. And for this purpose, I not only contemplated his breathing image in Isaac's-place, but visited the cabinet of natural history in the Vassilyostroff, to see some relics of him there. In one room I was shown a curious library, and all the mechanical instruments which had belonged to the tzar; also part of his wardrobe, from which I studied the costume for my picture. Here his height also was ascertained to me, by a nail driven in near the door, said to have been at his own request; and according to English measurement, it makes him six feet seven inches high. In this chamber is a waxen figure of the

same gigantic stature: it is dressed in the suit he wore when he declared his wife Catherine empress. The wig on the effigy is recorded to be of his own hair, which he had caused to be cut off during his Persian campaigns; and, it is added, that he wore this very wig to the day of his death. The face was modelled from his own, by a lady, during his life; and from it Monsieur Falconet drew some of the sublimest features of his statue. I acknowledge myself to be not less obliged to the fair artist.

In the course of my researches after records of this interesting monarch, I found a very curious tract (written in French), by an ambassador resident at the court of Peter, to his own sovereign; who, it seems, had requested his minister to send him a minute account of so extraordinary a man. I copied it carefully, and having made a translation of the part in question, as it lies by me the readiest, and as it must gratify you to see a description by an eyewitness, of one of the most distinguished amongst heroes, I shall tack on beneath:—

"Peter the first is of a shape excellently proportioned; his complexion is vivid and highly animated, and his eyes announce the greatest character and genius. His teeth are white and regular; his hair is dark brown and curling; and his whole physiognomy is pleasing, and bears the testimony in its features of the integrity and sincerity of his heart. He converses amiably with every one; and the serene smile which is naturally seated on his lips, gains the confidence and love of all."

"The greatest simplicity reigns in the court of the tsar, as well as in his own habits. His dress is plain, decorated neither with gold nor silver: his coat is of the German fashion, with sleeves after the Swedish form, lined with skins of sable and other animals. On the outside of his dress he wears a sword-belt embroidered with gold; and prefers the hat to the cap. He detests splendid distinctions on his own person, but is pleased to see his princes, counsellors, and generals wear them."

Having so properly introduced you, not even neglecting the ceremonial of making an ambassador the medium, to the imperial Peter; I shall leave you in so enviable a *tête à tête*, and once more say adieu!

LETTER XXVII.

St. Petersburgh, August, 1806.

BEING informed that after all my researches there still existed in the palace of Jutchinna, one portrait of the tzar Peter I had not seen, I determined to gain sight of it also; although the attempt was rather hopeless, the palace being the property of the empress dowager, once the favourite residence of the late emperor when archduke, and now constantly closed by his illustrious widow from the eye of curiosity. However, I lost no time in making my application; which being graciously received, a special permission was granted me to visit the apartment, so long consecrated to imperial sorrow.

The palace is about forty-three versts from St. Petersburgh, and is built in a modern castellated taste, of a wide extent; and so admirably situated, that from some points of view it reminds me of Windsor. Yet the resemblance is very faint; merely sufficient to suggest an idea of that august abode of our British kings. To compare the two would be trifling. Indeed I know of nothing of the sort that would bear the comparison; for I never yet beheld, in any country, a place so fitted by nature and art, for the residence of a powerful monarch, as Windsor castle. It stands as the very throne of majesty, whence a great potentate might be supposed to rule the world. There is something very imposing in magnificence, when undebased by the fripperies of ostentation. What Versailles or St. Cloud will ever impress the beholder with those awful respects for royalty with which he is struck when entering the courts of Windsor? How do the shades of our renowned Edwards and Henries rise before him! Their mighty souls were framed to fill such a place; and as we stand under a roof worthy to contain the monarch of the British empire, all the inspiration of the scene animates our hearts; with redoubled ardour we would repeat our vows of loyalty to our king, and rush into the field to defend his life and crown. Vaster palaces I have seen, and more gorgeous than Windsor, but never one so truly regal and sublime. It unites

the beauty of romantic scenery with the grandeur of royalty, and the strength of military power. Some places honoured by the residence of kings, are too gay for their dignity; others are too mean; excepting the object of my eulogium, and perhaps Hampton court, the palaces abroad are so far superior to the houses which bear the proud appellation in England, that, to a stranger, the very calling them by the name seems ridiculous. There is a harmony in rank, the disturbance of which injures even the greatest.

But to return to Jutchinna. The centre of the building is occupied by the empress dowager, during the summer. The wings are appropriated to the officers of the household and her majesty's diurnal visitors. The suite of rooms formerly belonging to the emperor Paul, like Voltaire's in the Sans Souci, are nearly in the state he left them. Not an article has been moved; papers and books, all lie just as they were when he quitted this place for St. Petersburgh. The contents of the chamber, in the Michaelofsky palace, in which he slept and died, have been brought hither. The bed stands in a corner of the room, hidden from immediate sight by a low screen. It is iron, of the Tula manufactory, without ornaments or curtains. This was the bed on which the unhappy monarch expired. Near it is his coat and boots, the last he wore. No wonder that it was difficult to obtain the empress's permission to see these apartments. It is but lately she could bear to enter them herself; and when she does, the hour is devoted to the regrets which must ever fill the bosom of a virtuous wife and tender woman.

Every step I passed over the palace, I listened to the praises of this admirable princess. I listened with attention; for I know of few pleasures equal to that of hearing well authenticated instances of goodness: it delights one with human nature, and consoles us for its miseries when we see power have the will to relieve them. The dowager empress claims from all who know her, a peculiar admiration, not only for general benevolence, but for the particular attention with which she treats all unfortunates recommended to her protection. Look around; and we see everywhere public proofs of her charity. How

numerous are the institutions she has founded and endowed for all descriptions of the wretched! And, countless as they seem to be, so sincere is her goodness, that she is not merely their benefactress; but the kind superintendant, to see that every thing is conducted according to her generous design. In short, she expends almost the whole of her revenue in deeds of charity: and as her time is also dedicated to the same heavenly purpose, thousands owe their health, comfort, and existence to her. Her life is, in all respects, worthy the imitation of the greatest princesses; for it is consistent throughout: no lip opens to name her, but unfeigned blessings follow. She is not more revered as an empress, than adored for her virtues: hers is the empire of the heart: and the amiable qualities of her imperial son place his on the same foundation.

Again I have travelled from my errand hither. But female excellence, who can resist? It would carry both thee and me from all the pictures in the universe; ay, from Indus to the pole, or from the pole to Indus! So, without further apology, I shall once more recur to the resemblance of the great Peter.

The portrait in question, is said to have been painted from its illustrious original when he was at Paris. The artist is a Frenchman. He has placed the tzar on horseback; and dressed him in a silk coat, decorated with the order of St. André. The character of the hero is lost, and the Parisian dancing-master is here *à cheval.* I came, I saw, and turned my back! for as nothing appeared amid this trumpery affectation worthy either the monarch, or one who was to commemorate his greatness, I left the room. Though, as I retreated, my eye fell on two exquisite marble busts of Henri Quatre and Sully; personages more deserving the society in which they were placed, than the picture was of its original.

Amongst various specimens of art in this palace I was shown two admirable Vernets, of the largest size, and finest style of his pencil; and finished with greater richness, than any other of his works that ever fell under my observation. Such being the result of my journey, I returned to St. Petersburgh, pleased with every part of my visit to the palace, but the very object which led me thither.

My drive homewards was as little pleasant as master Phaeton's, when he whipped through the burning spheres. Cold we can eludé, by warm involvements. But heat, marrow-piercing heat! who can escape its fiery darts? Clothes, carriages, walls, nothing can exclude its scorching rays; they mingle with the very air we breathe: and to shut our mouths against them, is to die by one sort of suffocation, because we will not endure the less mortal effects of the other. Besides the weather being so insufferably hot, the days are long even to painfulness. At midnight we may see to write by the light of the sky: and not from moon or stars, but by the beams of day still lingering in the heavens. Indeed, during what are called the longest days here, there is not more than two hours in the twenty-four without seeing the sun: and that privation does not produce darkness; as a something brighter than our twilight remains.

Were it not for the tremendous heat (not to be exceeded, I believe, in the West Indies), and the myriads of musquitoes that swarm from the marshy grounds, this unvarying sunshine might have its charms; but as it is, we cannot but sigh for

"The grotto's cool retreat, the forest's fresh'ning shade!"

And as I rival the poor panting Cephalus every hour with exclamations of *veni aura*, I hasten, as often as may be possible to meet the courted breeze amidst the groves of Strelna or Peterhoff. Most of the British merchants possess beautiful villas on this road; as well as do the nobility who, having places in the government, constantly abide near the residence; as their duty never permits them to quit the vicinity of the court, unless by the especial leave of the emperor, to visit for a short time in each year their estates at a distance. The romantic islands of the Neva, being within the neighbourhood of St. Petersburgh, afford some of them very charming retreats: and as you row along the river, you see its banks embellished by numbers of these beautiful houses.

The emperor has his favourite summer residence on the isle Kammenoiostroff. It is a pretty simple palace, fitted up with elegance and comfort; and opposite to it two yachts are always at anchor, ready to obey his majesty's or the empress's com-

mands, whenever they wish to pass upon the river. This side of St. Petersburgh certainly possesses the most beautiful environs. The variety of wooded scenery, the numerous palaces and splendid mansions embosomed in trees; and myriads of boats of every description on the Neva, some filled with boors, and others decorated with the gaiety of Venetian gondolas; under an azure sky, produce a *tout ensemble*, not to be expected in regions of the iron north.

The gardens of the venerable count Strogonoff are in this quarter: they are charmingly laid out; possessing every beauty which nature assisted, not overpowered, by art, can bestow. Here numbers of the fashionable world assemble most evenings at about five o'clock, and wandering from grove to grove, which hang with every fragrant and delicious production of the east; they amuse themselves with conversation and the scene, till music recals them to the lawns, where refreshments are prepared; and when night closes in, the finest fireworks terminate the pleasures of the evening.

In a picturesque and well chosen spot is placed a monument of antiquity, said to have been the tomb of Homer. It was brought from one of the islands of the Archipelago; and is accurately described by *Monsieur le Chevalier sur le Troad.* The basso relievos on its sides, and on each end, certainly refer to the events celebrated in the Iliad; and particularly to the exploits of Achilles. The sarcophagus is of white marble; but the sculpture, though possessing taste and beauty, is not so fine as other specimens we have in England. I forget from whom the count purchased it; but I believe the ingenious French author informs his readers. It is so long since I turned over the book, that most of the contents have escaped me. All I recollect is, that at the time of reading it I was much pleased; and I recommend you, for the sake of better information respecting Homer's tomb, to seek for *le Chevalier* to supply my deficiency.

I must confess, as I stood over this reputed tomb of the first of poets, that I felt none of those enthusiasms which I believe would have affected me on the spot where his remains were laid. I cannot reconcile to myself, devotion to genius with the sacrilege of disturbing the repository of its ashes. Removing

Homer's tomb from its original situation, seems to have arisen from no more respect to him, than the thieves intended to show reverence to Petrarch, when they stole away his bones to sell separately as classic relics. It having been brought to sale, I am not surprised at the fine taste of the count wishing to purchase so extraordinary a piece of antiquity; but certainly the place to *feel* Homer's tomb, should have been over Homer's grave. It was so Homer's example taught. He did not send mariners to steal away the monument of Achilles from the promontory of Sigeum: but he travelled thither himself. He stood by his hero's grave; and while invoking the spirit within, his own mighty genius burst the confines of the tomb, and the hero appeared! The vision passed before the poet, clad in arms and in glory, and he beheld the light no more. Insufferable brightness drank his visual ray; but lit up all within, with heaven's immortal fires. And Alexander too, that powerful monarch, might not he who uprooted empires, have easily raised from the ground a block of marble; and ordered the monument of his often-boasted model, the great Achilles, to have been brought to Macedon? But no; he also went to Sigeum to pay his vows to the illustrious shade, and placing a crown upon the tomb, exclaimed: "Achilles, thou wert thrice happy! Happy in thy valiant life, happy in such a friend as Patroclus, and happy in such a poet as Homer to immortalize thy memory!"

After this beautiful apostrophe, it will not be very *mal-apropos* to repeat my claim to one of these happinesses, by subscribing myself your faithful friend.

LETTER XXVIII.

St. Petersburgh, September, 1806.

I AM going to describe a scene that harrowed my heart. I have been to witness the execution of the KNOUT, to a height of torture which very seldom is now inflicted. The lenity of the emperor Alexander's disposition will not allow death, or the severer degrees of punishment to be adjudged to any of his subjects, but on the most decided proofs of terrible crimes. In the present instance, the guilt of the culprit was unquestionable, and he was regularly tried and sentenced.

The instruments and manner of performing this horrible execution, I have already described in my account of visiting the prison at Mosco. The unhappy wretch whom his crimes destined to be an example to mankind, was an istvostchick (or coachman) to count Ablenoffsky, a Polish nobleman, whom he inhumanly murdered one night, in bringing him from a party in the country. He effected his death by means of the key used for screwing the bolts of the carriage. The vehicle being a droshky, there was no other servant but the coachman.

At a conveniently dark and sequestered spot, the villain turned suddenly on his master, and striking him a stunning blow with the iron instrument, seized him, and finished the murder by strangling him with the reins. Having rifled the dead count of every valuable about his person, he left the body and the carriage, and made his escape. Morning discovered the horrid scene. Suspicion did not hesitate to point to the real perpetrator, and a pursuit was immediately ordered. Officers of justice went in every direction; and by their unwearied activity found him, after a search of several days, some versts from the Ladoga lake.

The place generally allotted for public executions, is near the Neva; being an open and muddy plain. When I arrived, a few companies of grenadiers were drawn up in line; and the natives were pouring upon the ground in multitudes. The gravity of their rough visages, mingling with the fierce visage of

the Cossacs, and the severe gloom of the police, gave an expression of horror to the crowding groups more consonant with the expected scene, than the noisy mobs beneath the gallows at the Old Bailey.

Ten o'clock in the morning was the appointed hour; but more than another hour elapsed before the criminal was brought to the place of punishment. He was a robust and fine looking man, with light hair and beard; possessing not one trait in his face to announce him capable of murder, or of even less terrible crimes. Had I been called upon to declare my opinion of that man's disposition from his face, I should have pronounced him every thing that was meek and harmless. I am no physiognomist; and must leave this apparent contradiction of their science to be settled by those who are.

The poor wretch, attended by part of the police, had been walked through the streets; in order to show him to the populace, and to strike them with horror at his guilt. As soon as the procession arrived in front of the troops, a circle was formed, and preparations made for the instant commencement of the execution. A paper being read aloud in the Russ language, which, most probably, was an account of his crime and sentence; he was speedily stripped of his clothes, leaving on his person only a pair of loose trowsers. In the midst of this silent group (and awful indeed was their silence) stood, firm and well secured, a block of wood, about three feet high, having three cavities in the top, to receive the neck and arms. Being fully prepared for his dreadful punishment, the unhappy man crossed himself, repeating his *Gosperdiem Pomelea* with the greatest devotion. The executioner then placed him with his breast to the board, strongly binding him to it by the neck and the upper part of his arms, passing the rope close under the bend of both knees. Thus bowed forward, the awful moment approached. The first stroke was struck, and each repeated lash tore the flesh from the bone. A few seconds elapsed between each; and for the first ten or twelve, the poor sufferer roared most terribly; but soon becoming faint and sick, the cry died away into groans; and in a few minutes after, nothing was heard except the bloody splash of the knout on the senseless body of the

wretched man. Oh! if God punished so, who would stand before his judgment seat? Had the compassionate Alexander beheld it, I believe that this would have been the last infliction of this tremendous punishment.

After full an hour had been occupied in striking these dreadful blows (and more than two hundred were given him), a signal was made from the head officer of the police, and the criminal was raised a little from the block. Not the smallest sign of life seemed to remain: indeed, so long did it appear to have fled, that during the half of the lashing, he had sunk down as low as the ligatures which bound him would allow. The executioner took the pale and apparently lifeless body by the beard, while his assistant held an instrument like a brush with iron teeth, and placing it a little below his temple, struck it with the utmost force, and drove its pointed fangs into the flesh. The opposite temple and forehead received the same application. The parts thus pierced, were then rubbed with gunpowder, to remain, should the mangled sufferer survive, a perpetual mark of his having undergone the punishment.

You would suppose that rigour had exhausted all her torments, that justice was now appeased! But no; another punishment yet remained,—to deprive the nose of its nostrils. The inflicting pincers, something like monstrous curling irons, were inserted up the nose of him whom I supposed dead; (and indeed I only endured the latter part of the sight, from having imagined that these afflictions were directed to one already past the sense of pain); the performer of this dreadful sentence, aided by his companion, actually tore each from his head in a way more shocking than can be described. The acuteness of this last torture, brought back sense to the torpid body:—what was my horror, to see the writhings of the poor mangled creature; and my astonishment, as soon as he was unbound, to see him rise by the assistance of the men, and walk to a cart ready to return him to his prison! From whence, if he did not die, he was immediately to be conveyed to Siberia, there to labour for life. His lost strength seemed to revive every moment; and he sat in the vehicle perfectly upright, being covered

with his caftan, which he himself held upon his shoulders, talking very composedly with those who accompanied him.

His sentence, I understand, was *to be knouted without mercy.* Of course, in such cases few ever survive; or if they do, for want of care, or even common assistance, a mortification generally takes place, and death relieves them from further suffering. This was the fate of the miserable creature in question, who expired the following day, after passing the first post towards his banishment.

How far this sort of punishments may have an effect on the people at large, I cannot pretend to say: at present they are very rare: and whatever may be the horror with which they are viewed, I do not find them to be decisive preventives; as murders are continually happening in unfrequented parts of the city, without the perpetrators being discovered.

I have lately been told that what actuated the istvostchick to the murder of the count, was the cruelty and penuriousness of that nobleman, not only to the man himself, but to the rest of his slaves. Indeed he was well known to be of a violent and austere temper, and one of the most avaricious amongst mortals. Hence my judgment on the poor fellow's face might not be far wrong; as ignorance renders the best natures liable to be wrought upon by injuries and want. Vengeance is a passion that requires better reasoning than a clown's to subdue.

The *knout* is, I believe, the only severe punishment remaining from the many barbarous kinds continually practised in the early ages of the empire. The manner of inflicting it at the commencement of the reign of Peter the First, was different from the present mode, and much more savage. The sufferer was fixed to the back of the executioner's man, by means of ropes: and his lower extremities held so fast by another, that resistance was impossible. In the time of the early tzars, the performers of this horrid task were regarded with so much respect, that they were admitted into the best society. Nay, it is even said, that in those days, merchants, thinking it honourable thus to pass into ranks above them, paid large sums of money to be allowed to fulfil the murderous duty. When their ambi-

tions were satisfied, they then resold the vocation at an enormous profit.

Perhaps fashion dictated, even amongst these unpolished people; and the value of the executionership arose from the illustrious example so often set by the great dukes of Muscovy, who, to fill up a few leisure moments, or as a recreation from the more anxious acts of government, frequently showed themselves to their subjects executing the sentence of the law, merely as *amateurs*. However, in the course of time, the bright beams of civilization began to enlighten this benighted quarter of the globe. Letters and humanity came in together: and the honour anciently attached to the torturer's profession fell to the ground. The post was no longer deemed enviable; the royal hands were humanely and wisely occupied; and it became so difficult to get a permanent performer, that a law was passed, not permitting it to be sold, but to remain as an *agreeable* inheritance in the family of the last purchaser for ever. Whether the entailment was made as a memorial of the virtues or of the vices of the then proprietor, we cannot pretend to judge at this distance of time. But surely the *knout*, as an estate, is by no means improvable; nor is it a profession that will now-a-days occasion the next heir to be very anxious for the rapid exit of the present incumbent. In case the male progeny of this tremendous member of society fails, the corporation of butchers are to be called upon instantly to replace the defunct, by an able-bodied beginner of a new line from amongst themselves.

We need no greater proof of the superiority of modern Russia over the ancient empire, in the quality which best becomes man, that of mercy, than by comparing the respect with which the executioner was then regarded, with the abhorrence in which even his instrument is now held. It is an abomination to touch the knout.

That I have seen it, is a sufficient abomination to me; and when I shall wash my eyes from the impression I know not. If your dreams be but half as much disturbed by the recital, as mine were by the sight, I have broken your rest for a night or two at least, and so little thanks will arrive by the next packet to your friend.

LETTER XXIX.

Torzok, October, 1806.

THAT season drawing near, when I promised to renew the happiest moments of my life, in the dear city of Mosco, I set off towards it on the twenty-fifth of this month.

The snow had not yet fallen, which was to have been the appointed signal of my return; but as it was daily expected, as they told me autumn lingered longer than usual, I ventured to abridge the hours of my exile from all that is lovliest to thy friend, and without further delay prepare my flight to the interior. Accordingly, using all expedition, I set out on wheels, hoping to have occasion to change them for the swifter sledge before I reached my place of destination.

Not having left St. Petersburgh in the *heroic* company I entered it; though I afterwards found that my aforesaid *noble familiar's* spirit had entered most potently into the breast of my *valet de chambre;* no circumstance of any noteworthy complexion occurred to me during the first hundred versts of my journey. The usual inconveniencies attending travellers were my only crosses: such as delays, and impositions on the part of postmasters and their myrmidons; who were more than ordinarily exorbitant, when they discovered I was an Englishman, and therefore, they believed, with exhaustless coffers. Hence, my poor purse which unluckily, was made of a different material from Fortunatus's wishing cap, contracted so wofully from their various extortions, that I confess, for once I found the gold dispensing character of my country, rather impoverishing. In order to expedite the slow movements of the men who brought the cavalry, I was obliged to sweeten their toil with a no inconsiderable douceur. A much larger one is necessary to sharpen the directions of the *maitre de poste:* and another must be put into the hand of the stariost, a sort of overseer of the whole; who is generally the oldest man in the village, the judge of its quarrels, and the umpire in all travelling disputes.

Unfortunately for me, the abilities of this sage adviser of

one of the derrevnas, were called into action by the very fellow in my *suite* who had been inoculated with a fever for battles during our last disastrous campaign on this very road. Having two vehicles with me, one belonging to a friend, and the other my own, I had proceeded in his, and left my kibitka at the village with my servant to get the wheels greased, and then to follow me. Followed I was; but not by my carriage. A man and horse came up *ventre à terre*, telling me that my man was taken prisoner, and my kibitka, seized, for an outrage he had committed at the posthouse. I returned instantly, and met a scene more vexatious than I had even anticipated. During the absence of the courier, on the men laying hands on the carriage, he had drawn his sword on them all; and cut and slashed about with such might and main, that when I drove into the yard I found half a dozen fellows with gory cheeks, and one unfortunate boor (who, it seems, had been most active with my movables), with no inconsiderable indents in his *cranium*. The village was up in arms; and with much ado I learnt that the origin of the fray was a little overcharge respecting the greasing of the wheels, which my provident steward was determined not to pay. An altercation ensued: and flying to the count's argument of a knock down blow with his stick, a score of boors returned it instead of one; my carriage was seized to indemnify the man for his grease and ill usage, till I could be brought back to pay interest for the whole; my honest Scapin no sooner saw a hand laid on his master's property, than out flew his rapier; and I just arrived in time to save perhaps his own life, and one or two others against whom he had pointed his weapon.

I entered the field of action, greeted by the abuse of half the village: for these clowns are very summary in their resentments, clubbing all of a family together; if a father offends, so does the son; if a servant, so does his master; and so on: no individual bears the weight of his own follies, but all who happen to be in his company share the burthen. Another effect of complete ignorance, is this indiscrimination and injustice. However, with much waving of my hand to and fro, and *courteous action*, though I believe the most powerful one was hold-

ing up my purse; I at last commanded silence: and by means of the stariost appeased the mob, and compromised with the poor mustick (the name by which these peasants are designated), for his broken head, with a present of ten rubles. Glad was I at any price to get out of a scrape, which might have proved very troublesome to me as a stranger; and to my servant, as a native, most serious, if not dangerous. And thus my trusty domestic, in his zeal to save me ten pence, run me into an expense of as many half crowns.

This circumstance, with the eagerness with which gold was received as an equivalent for a whole skin, will show you the passion of the lower order of Russians for money. Indeed, when we consider the hardness of their fare, the ruggedness of their apparel, and the baseness of their abodes; and that these are the utmost of their ideas of actual enjoyment, is not their insatiable avidity inexplicable? Here and there we see a monster in nature who loves gold for its own sake: but in general the most avaricious have a further end in view, some particular pleasure to which they intend to devote their wealth. Contrary to this, with the Russian boor, it is a passion for which I cannot account; and rather seems a sort of wish imbibed originally, by imitation, in the cities; thence brought to the country, and so spread like an infection amongst the people, filling them with an aimless desire. For surely, to wish for gold for no other end but to possess it, is the most aimless, useless, joyless longing that ever occupied the breast of man. A Russian peasant will do any thing, suffer any thing for money. And I believe the wounded mustick would gladly have submitted to a second cut to receive other ten rubles. But why they resent the bastinado more in the villages than in the towns, I cannot guess; though so it is, as the quiet flagellation the afterwards rebellious istvostchicks took in Mosco, can testify.

All being peaceably settled my servant mounted the kibitka: and I having rather ungratefully threatened his valour, if he ever again exerted it so rashly in my service, we quietly departed from the village, and pursued our way to Mosco.

Mosco, November.

Having slept two nights on the road, one at a small place called Zinagat; and the other at the town of Torzok, celebrated for embroidered leathern boots, ridicules, gloves, &c. I occupied my days in gazing about me; but saw little to interest, excepting the Valdaia hills, whose ravines, and meandering waters reminded me of the valleys in the north of Devonshire. During this long drive of nearly a week, I had much time for thought of every description: retrospection led me back to England and all its dear domestic scenes; my family, my friend, my home, where each loved companion *mingles into bliss!* then, so quickly do the ideas of them the heart values sympathise, and meet in a point, anticipation fled to Mosco: happiness, exhaustless happiness was there! and hoping at some future day to unite the sources of my past and present joys; to see those of England in Russia, and those of Russia in England: thus musing, on the thirtieth of October I entered Mosco; and for once in my life found a sweet reverie broken by a sweeter reality.

I have been overtaken by the frost, about five posts distant; and on driving into the city, was surprised to see every thing winter and covered with snow, and all the regular sledge equipages out. My arrival being known, I met on this my second visit, if possible, a still more cordial reception than on my first. This at least convinced me, how uncandid was the charge, that the Moscovite nobility were only hospitable to strangers from a fondness of novelty. So far from this being the case, every door, and every kindness, was opened to me wider than before. I rather seemed returned to a city of the most affectionate relations, than the guest of a people of a different race from my own. Neither pride, ostentation, nor caprice, have I been able to discover amongst these generous nobles. Their magnificence is habitual; the pleasures they enjoy are given with liberality to others; and the friendship they profess, is as free from inconstancy as the object ought to be from ingratitude.

Amongst those whose attentions have been the most flattering to me, is the grand chamberlain, prince Gallitzen. He is a

venerable old man of eighty-five years of age, full of wisdom and benevolence. Formerly he passed much time at the court of London: and many are the hours of his valuable society with which he honours me, to talk over the merits of a country he so highly respects. A pleasant theme for an Englishman, and one which my tongue delights to dwell on.

Perhaps you may be surprised to read of so many persons bearing the title of Prince, inhabiting this capital: but when you recollect that Russia is an empire that comprises about the seventh part of the firm land of the whole earth, is as large as half of all Asia, and more than twice as big as Europe, and that numerous territories of this vast tract of country were, hardly three centuries ago, governed by their native hereditary princes, wonder will subside that there are yet many of their descendants lords of large possessions, still respected according to their birth, and living in all the splendor of rank and munificence.

Knæs is the Russian term for Prince. And whichever of the ancient princes had the greatest success in throwing a temporary yoke over the neighbouring sovereigns, he arrogated to himself the title of Velikie Knæs, or Grand-prince; sometimes the princes of Novgorod were paramount, sometimes those of Kief, sometimes those of Vladimir, and so of others. Owing to their wars, the khans of Tartary for a long time dictated to them all. In short, a continual struggle for power deluged the country with blood until the valour of Ivan Vassillievitch II. laid a chain on their necks, and uniting the numerous principalities into one vast empire, assumed to himself the title of Tzar, or emperor.

Hence we meet with so many princes in Russia, who are in general of the blood of these regal families: and though, perhaps, the inheritance of some may lie on the borders of the northern Pacific Ocean, on the confines of China, or in Tartary itself, yet they all crowd to the centre of the empire; and usually in Mosco pass the winter, in scenes of magnificence not inferior to a royal court.

As to the title of Duke, it does not properly belong to Russia. What we in England call archduke, is grand-prince, meaning

(as the son of the tzar) the head of all the princes of the empire. The appellation Boyar, is inferior to that of prince. Vaivodes are governors of provinces. And the titles of Count and Baron were, I believe, first introduced by Peter the Great. I think I cannot end the history of these sounding names better than by giving you a copy of the manner in which the great Catherine used to write all her titles. First premising, that the sovereigns of Russia never put their names before that of the supreme Monarch of the universe.

"By the grace of God, Catherine II, empress and autocratrix of all the Russias, of Mosco, Kief, Vladimir, Novgorod, &c. Tzaritza of Kazan, tzaritza of Astrakhan, tzaritza of Siberia, tzaritza of the Tauridan Chersonese, grand princess of Smolensk, princess of Pskove, Esthonia, Livonia, Karelia, Twer, Yugoria, Permia, Viatka, Bulgaria, and other countries. Grand-princess of Nishney Novgorod, of Tschernigof, Riazane, Polotsk, Rostof, Yaroslavl, Bielosero, Udoria, Obdoria, Kondia, Vitepsk, Mestislavl; sovereign of the whole northern region, and of the country of Iveria; of the Kartalinian and Grusinian tzars, and of the Kabardinian country, of the Circassians, and of the mountain princes, and of others, hereditary princess and sovereign."

And now, having led you such a race after the signs of honour, it is but right that I should bring you to repose a little where the substance lies: and so, once more to the prince Gallitzen. His mansion is splendid, and in every point worthy of his taste and fortune. I dined with him soon after my arrival; and again observed some very fine pictures which I had neglected to notice to you during my last sojourn in this city.

The first on which I could steadily fix my eye (for remember the prince and I were not alone, several of my fair acquaintance were present, whose charms might well attract my observation from art to nature), was a Saint Sebastian, *said* to be painted by Salvator Rosa, exquisitely fine: but so peculiar were its beauties, that I strongly doubt whether even that great master could ever produce such a picture as this. In the first place, the colouring is so vivid, clear and fleshy; and in the second, the drawing is so accurate; and thirdly, the distribution

of light and shade is more harmoniously disposed, than I ever saw in any of his most esteemed and largest productions. In short, to bring you an instance in his Prodigal Son, which is deservedly regarded as one of his best; the styles are so different between the Saint Sebastian and it, that it would require the penetration of Apelles and Protagoras united, to discover traces in either of having both been produced by the same hand. As several persons whom I met with, pronounced it to be a work of Salvator Rosa; and as their connoisseur experience in the galleries of the continent ought to give them authority, I did not pretend to dispute their judgment, though I could not assent; but must still deny our favourite banditti painter the merit of producing this saint. If I dare presume to affix a name to it, I would say that I rather think it bears the marks of Michael Angelo de Caravaggio.

The prince can boast a *chef-d'œuvre* of Murilio. The subject is two boys eating a watermelon. They are represented the size of life, and possess all that fascination, so true to nature, which distinguishes the productions of this Spaniard. There is a fine duplicate of this picture in the elector's gallery at Munich. Many smaller pictures of the Dutch and Italian schools ornament the saloon in which I sat; but time, and ignorance and neglect in those who have the care of them, have so wofully abused their beauties, that they are now scarcely worth notice.

Indeed, as I looked around on the assemblage, some good, others bad, and most indifferent, I could not but recollect the impression I have so often felt, both at home and abroad, when taken by a travelled lover of arts to see his collection. His walls in general, are plentifully hung; and at as great an expense as if every pannel had been painted by the fathers of the art: but how easy is it to see, that not depending on his own judgment, the *amateur* has been led by those *cicerone* gentlemen, who are ever ready to save him the trouble of seeing, selecting, and buying: and, who thus directing his taste both in sculpture and painting, fill his house, and their own pockets, by the labours of merely secondary artists.

But I should be ungrateful to my illustrious host, and most ungracious to myself, were I to dwell longer on the faults of a

minor part of his furniture, when all else, his bronzes and his statues, were admirable; and himself, moved like a Nestor through the scene. Though I passed so long a day with him, from noon till night, the interest never flagged. His conversation teemed with information and urbanity. The characters of men lay open before him: he decided on all with a precision that declared his judgment; while the candour with which he examined their actions, convinced you of the goodness of his heart.

The evening brought in new company, who turned the scene to a gaiety in which he partook with smiles; and an elegant supper terminated the night. A very well timed period! It is twelve o'clock! That witching hour, when all the grim heroes and heroines of the *Tales of Wonder* are afloat! So, for fear of being visited by some of the said sheeted fraternity, I shall even be beforehand with them, and assume a double share of their wardrobe by getting between the *sheets of my bed.* Therefore, good night to thee, my friend!

LETTER XXX.

Mosco, December, 1806.

I DINED yesterday with count Razumofsky; and partook of a repast, which, at this sterile season of the year, teemed with all the luxuries of spring and autumn: fruits of every climate, ripened in hothouses; and vegetables of all descriptions, raised in cellars. A strange place, you will think, for the exercise of horticulture! But so it is; and by the exclusion of the cold air, and the admission of heat from the stoves, these subterraneous gardens produce summer vegetables all the year round. Green peas and asparagus are here as common at christmas, as potatoes and winter cabbages may be with you.

Indeed the Russians are very much indebted to the fostering care of our mother earth; for in her bosom do they also treasure the ice which, during the hot months, is used to cool their feverish bloods. In no country, not even Italy, can this attemperating substance be consumed in greater quantities. It is put down into the vaults appointed for its reception every year in such vast shoals, that, I am told, from the continual replenishing, (and using that first which lies a top, and consequently the latest deposited,) there is ice in some of the cellars in Mosco, which has lain at their bottoms for nearly a century. The ice is so strong, that when the owner has portions taken out for consumption, the servants are obliged to cut it up with pickaxes.

Hence you see, between vegetables and ice, the two seasons (thus imprisoned during their own proper reigns, to break forth and invade each other's rights), occupy almost as great an extent of building underground as the city possesses above.

Count Razumofsky's house is in every way answerable to the splendor of his entertainments: it is lately rebuilt; and in a style that does honour to his taste and liberality. I am told that the structure alone, cost him a million of rubles. He possesses many expensive pictures; but as they are not yet arranged, I had not an opportunity of judging of their merits. Only one

saloon is completely hung: and that is with very fine works from the Dutch school.

In one of the rooms I observed a portrait of Peter the Great, which more resembled the statue of Falconet than any I had yet seen. Its features convey an elevation of soul and energy perfectly consistent with a representation of that hero. A circumstance which the count related, gave an additional interest to the picture. He requested I would notice that the head had been sewed into the present canvass on which the figure is painted. That small piece, he told me, was the only part that was original; the rest having been added by an ancestor of his own.

While Peter the First was travelling in Holland in his usual incognito style, he stopped at an inn on the road for refreshments. He was shown into a room where a large picture hung at the upper end: it was a portrait. And as he sat at his meal he observed the landlord look several times from him to the portrait, and from the portrait to him, with a kind of comparing scrutiny. "Whose picture is that?" inquired the emperor.

"The tzar of Muscovy:" replied the man; "it was brought to me from Paris, and every body says it is his very self. And I was thinking it was very like you, sir."

Peter made no answer to this latter observation; but affecting to eat his dinner with too keen an appetite to hear distinctly, finished it in a few minutes: and paying his reckoning as an ordinary passenger, sent the landlord out of the room on some excuse; then taking a knife from his pocket, cut the head from the shoulders of the portrait and put it in his bosom. He left a large sum of money on the table, more than sufficient he thought, to pay the damage he had done; and immediately, before the mischief was discovered, he took his departure in his humble equipage. This act was to prevent his being recognised as he proceeded, by any who might have afterwards stopped at the same inn, and like the landlord have perceived the resemblance: and certainly, but for the equivalent on the table, the deed itself would never be supposed to have been that of an emperor.

On his return to Russia, he gave this relic to an ancestor of

count Razumofsky; to whom the monarch told the story attached to it, with much merriment at the idea of what must have been the amazement of the observing landlord, when he saw both the head and its likeness flown.

This was not the only interesting object which excited my attention during my visit to the munificent count. I met with a man under the protection of this nobleman, whose history might afford grounds for a very pretty romance. He is a Frenchman, a native of Bourdeaux; and was put, when a boy, on board a merchant ship, in order to learn the duty of a sailor. Soon after this, the war broke out between Great Britain and the Republic, and the ship in which he sailed was taken, and he carried prisoner to England. However, he did not remain in confinement long, but entered on board a small British ship of war bound to our settlements in New Holland. As fate would have it, a violent storm arose; and the vessel was wrecked on one of the islands not many leagues from Otaheite. Himself and one seaman were the only persons who escaped; for not a trace of the men, nor the ship, remained, after the tempestuous horrors of the scene dispersed.

The inhabitants, instead of seizing them as a prey, received the sufferers with the most humane hospitality. Hope for awhile flattered them that some ship might also be driven thitherward, which not enduring so much as their's had, would return them safe to Europe. But days and weeks wearing away without any signs of release, they at last began to regard the island as their future home. And a short time so accustomed them to the society and manners of the country, that in a few months more, they were perfectly resigned to their situation. By degrees they laid aside European modes, and assumed the habits of the natives; forsaking their clothes; hunting and fishing, and doing just as if they had been born amid the Friendly Isles. They learnt the language, allowed themselves to be tattooed; and at length sealed their insular fates by marriage.

The subject of my narrative was little more than fifteen when he thus domesticated himself. Being of a handsome person, he was honoured with the hand of the daughter of the

king, or chief; and having become thus royally allied, he received the investiture of nobility; namely a process of tatooing confined to chiefs alone. The body thus *imprinted*, if I may use the expression, is marked all over with a beautiful damask pattern, in forms not inferior to the finest Etruscan borders. The most eminent insignia of his royal distinction was, that the whole of the left side of his forehead, and below his eye, was one dark mass of tattoo. This latter appendage might please a savage taste, but it certainly was very hideous. But independently of that, I must acknowledge, to me there is something very admirable in the idea of a fine male figure without any other covering than these beautiful enamellings: his feathered crown, and bow and quiver, seem to apparel him like a savage god. So true is nature to herself, that she never feels such an awful admiration of the human form divine, as when she beholds it in its native freedom. What figure clothed in all the pomp of robes, and crowns, and sceptres, ever so impressed the mind with a stamp of greatness, as the Apollo Belvidere? And surely, when we consider the athletic pursuits and liberty of limbs with the noble stature of many of the natives across the Atlantic and Pacific Oceans, my respected friend, the president of the British royal academy, well expressed himself, when on leaving America, a youth, and first beholding the Apollo at Rome, he exclaimed: "What a fine Mohawk warrior!" It was the language of nature, and a true compliment to the artist. Owing to the present habits of civilization being totally different from those of ancient Greece, the human structure seldom attains any perfection: so no wonder the exclamation that the Apollo recalled the remembrance of any existing men, should surprise the generality of hearers. I have been more lucky; thanks to the mould in which nature cast some forms of my acquaintance, and the exercises which completed them! You know, to the vast expense of your time and patience, the use my pencil makes of the living models which a happy fate has thrown in my way; for painters may boast as they will about *ideal beauty*, but the outline of no fancied figure ever carried with it such perfect grace and harmony, as one drawn from a really existing being, of fine pro-

portions and manly character. It was the study of nature alone that formed the Grecian artists. From the lovely females of Greece was the celebrated Venus modelled: and from the beautiful and naked youths, drawing their bows on the sands of the Egean Sea, did the sculptor of the Python Apollo collect the graces of that transcendent figure.

But to return to my adventurer of the isles. His tattooing has carried me into an almost Shandean digression: but having just united him to a fond bride, I hope there is no need of apology for leaving him so long. However, I shall resume.

The young Frenchman and his companion, a few days after the wreck, had found means to save some articles which were afterwards very serviceable to them. But the most precious things they preserved, were fire arms, with some gunpowder: and for once, the importing of that death-dispersing article was productive of blessings to the people amongst whom it came. Our new young chief, and his British companion, exerted themselves to a good effect in putting a stop to the practice of devouring the prisoners taken in war. The marriage of the former invested him with authority. And having learnt the language, his persuasions were so conclusive, that in the course of a very little time, it was rare to hear that the unnatural meal had even been taken by stealth. However, so wedded were some few to this horrid glüttony, that he found it necessary to add threats to his commands; and having expressed in the strongest terms his abhorrence of this practice, he told them that the first man he saw attempt to devour a prisoner, he would put the offender to immediate death.

Shortly afterwards a skirmish took place between his people and their enemies. A number of prisoners were taken; and almost all of the islanders held his commands in such respect, that none presumed to disobey excepting two, whose cannibal appetites were yet unsatiated. They slew an elderly female captive, and commenced their repast upon her body. Our resolute Frenchman descried them at a distance; and going towards them, levelled a musquet at the bloody banquet; killed one of the wretches with the horrid morsel in his mouth, and, with another shot brought down his voracious accomplice in the act

of flight. This bold example so awed the rest, that from that hour until the day he left the island, (a space of fourteen years) not a prisoner ever met with this inhuman fate. From so great a change, and particularly in a custom superstitiously revered by the natives, and grateful to their savage appetites, I have no doubt that could we have visited the island during the sway of our young hero, we should have found a rude civilization amongst the people, rendering them far superior to the neighbouring natives.

So reconciled were the shipwrecked pair (for the Englishman also married), to the spot they had now made their homes, that although many ships of different nations touched there, yet no inducements could prevail on them to quit their new country. My narrator told me he always showed every friendship in his power to the captains of the vessels; seeing that the best produce of the island, particularly pork, should be given to them for the articles they brought to barter. He was also of essential service in pointing out to them the difficult navigation round the several islands.

The animation with which he recited these circumstances, strongly marked the fearless independence of his former life. He spoke with the decision of one whose commands had been unappealable, and all the chieftain commanded in his eyes. But when he talked of his domestic happiness; still true to the expression of unrestrained nature, his sighs penetrated the heart. He described his home in the most lively colours, the fondness of his wife, his own tenderness for her and for her children; the blissful days he past with her, where, possessed of every wish, he enjoyed her love, and the society of his old sea companion. "I was then master of all!" said he, "I am now nothing: an outcast, without a home, without a friend!" His tears for a long time prevented his proceeding. And my friend will not wonder that my eyes for a moment bore him company.

About three years since, one of the Russian ships which had left this country on a voyage of discoveries, touched at the island, and was received with every mark of kindness by the king and his family. The young chief became the interpreter between the Europeans and the natives; and besides procuring

the crew all they wanted, loaded the officers with useful presents. To this vessel, and his own humanity, may be dated the misery of himself and his family.

One night it blew a violent gale of wind: and the commander of the Russian frigate finding it would be impossible to keep his anchorage in a bay so full of unseen dangers, made several signals to the island, in hopes that some experienced native would come off, and direct him how to steer. Every moment increased their jeopardy; the storm augmented in fury, and at every blast they expected to be torn from their cables and dashed to atoms on the rocks. Again the signals were repeated; and ere long they were answered from the shore by our friend, who had been prevailed on by his wife to attempt reaching the vessel. "The foreign chief," said she, "will give you something for me, either a looking glass or a handkerchief."

But the whirlwind raged so tremendously that he refused, telling her, that he thought the tempest was more than he could combat; and that should he venture, perhaps the wish for so trifling a gift would cost her, her husband; he might be drowned, and then they would be lost to each other for ever. She had been too long used to the rashness with which her people braved the sea in all weathers, to be persuaded by this argument; and (O woman! woman! or rather, slanderer of her sex!) she still persisted to long for the handkerchief, and that he would go!

The ancient gallantry *Française*, and another signal of distress from the ship, got the better of his judgment: he dashed into the waves, and boldly stemming their fury reached the vessel. The overjoyed crew, as they heard his voice calling to them, as he approached through the storm, cast out a rope to him, by which they hoisted him up the ship's side. The most grateful acknowledgments greeted him as soon as he jumped on the deck: they hailed him as a kind of god, their deliverer. And putting his hand to the helm, and giving the requisite directions, he soon steered them from the dangers of the bay, till they rode in safety on the main ocean.

He asked now to have a boat to carry him on shore: but the wind still blowing hurricanes, and if possible increasing, they

would not venture any, but offered him *a plank!* He seized it to leap overboard: it was *split*—Barbarians! and death must inevitably have been his fate, had he plunged with it into the sea. He remonstrated, but before much altercation could ensue, the ship was driven too far to sea to allow of any hope of reaching the island in any smaller vessel than itself. Despair overwhelmed the generous young man. None understood his feelings; all gratitude seemed to have departed with their danger. The blackness of the night, and the rapidity with which the ship bore away, soon deprived him of all traces of land: and when morning dawned, not even on the line of the horizon could he perceive the smallest vestige of the spot which contained all his happiness.

His misery can better be conceived than described. To be thus recompensed for all his personal risks! It was a cruelty beyond his imagination. Surely the captain might have kept the sea till the storm had subsided, and then in justice he ought to have returned with his deliverer, and given him back to his country and family. He had endangered his life to save theirs. They had no claims on him, but the common ones of compassion; and yet for them he had plunged into the waves, had braved every peril, and hazarded every thing dear. He had every demand upon their gratitude, and they betrayed him! Such conduct was as unmanly as inhuman: it was base to the lowest pitch of detestation. Surely the loss of a few days to have effected their benefactor's return, could have made no great difference in a year's voyage. Besides, should the captain of these navigators, like ours, give an account of his discoveries to the world; so honourable a behaviour to the man who had saved his ship and crew, would have told more for the character of his heart, and perhaps have gained him more fame, than the discovery of half a dozen islands. Honour is a man's own act, a discovery is fortune's; and each, in the estimation of reflection, is valued according to its intrinsic worth.

The unhappy chief begged to be put on shore somewhere in European settlements, hoping there to hear of a ship going to the quarter of the globe that now contained his country. With this poor request, his ungrateful companions acquiesced, and

landed him on the coast of Kamtschatka: whence he travelled, enduring the severest hardships, to Mosco.

He has been a few weeks only arrived, merely resting here, in his way to St. Petersburgh; meaning to lay his case before the emperor, whose benevolence, he trusts, will enable him to regain his family. He was forwarded from Kamtschatka hither, by a passport from governor to governor. Tedious has been his voyage, and tedious his journeys, you will readily believe, when I add that he has already been three years an exile from his wife and children. During this long period, what may not have befallen them? Probably, his wife has sunk a victim to sorrow for her own folly, and her husband's loss: or war may have desolated the country, and the family of the European chief have been the first sacrificed to the sanguinary appetites of the victors!

These thoughts rack him day and night, and give him an air of such deep melancholy, that it is impossible to look on his countenance without being sensible that a more than ordinary grief absorbs his soul. He must be about two and thirty, although he does not look five and twenty. His figure is fine, with a most commanding deportment: but when he talks of his wife, all is subdued: he throws himself along the ground, and either remains for a considerable time afterwards profoundly silent, or weeps with all the bitterness of hopeless sorrow. But when he names those who brought him away, indignation, reproaches, accusations, seem to inflame him to madness; and he walks from side to side with an energy of step, and vehemence of action perfectly savage, but wonderfully striking and grand.

As he found me so ready to enter into his feelings, he spoke with the greater unreserve, and consulted me on his plans. I advised him, should he find, on application to the emperor, that it would be long ere a vessel could be sent out to the South Seas, to go directly from St. Petersburgh to England; where, I told him, I was sure he would meet not only with the most generous sympathy, but very probably an immediate opportunity of reaching the Friendly Isles.

He heard me as gratefully as if I had had the power myself

to transport him to his country; and declared, that were he doomed never again to see it, his life would be misery and his death wretched. "Even to have been cast back again, bleeding on the rocks," said he, "on the fatal night I left it; to have been carried to my home, to have died amidst the embraces of my wife and children, that would have been happiness! But now, my life is cheerless, I must close my eyes alone!" His tears rolled over his cheek; and he turned his back, while I heard him sob almost to suffocation.

I hope for the honour of affection, that this feeling, this resolution may last. But man is so mutable! Besides, this unfortunate is in the meridian of his days, evidently of the liveliest passions: he is also a European who, having left his country when a boy, knew nothing of the fascinating luxuries of civilization. When he becomes more intimately acquainted with our habits and our comforts; and when, perhaps, some tender European female, like Desdemona, may listen to his story, and *love him for the dangers he has past!* may not he then, too, probably forget the Otaheitan islands. If he do not; should I hear that he has indeed sailed for their distant shores; I shall for ever after admire, as much as I now pity, him; and regard him as a most extraordinary example of constancy and firmness. But should he become reconciled to Europe, and cease to sigh for the simple pleasures of his early years; he will only add another proof to the many already existing of human faithlessness and frailty.

I know you will hoot me for this doubt; and tell me that three years of constancy is quite probation enough to insure him for the remainder. But those years were past, part on sea, and part in miserable journeys. Ease, I dread as the foe to his resolution. Some, that fight like lions when you attempt them by storm, by the sap fall as quietly into your hands as an infant child. So I fear that repose, and the pleasures of society, may undermine the fidelity of our young chief; and then, what is to blame? He was a man, and he fell! "True," you will say, "but as he is a man he ought to stand: boys may plead the vice of human nature; it is the business of men to conquer it."

A noble principle: and he who aims at it, is more likely to maintain his ground, than he who strikes lower. I acknow-

ledge, that in judging of ourselves, it should be our standard: but when of others, mercy bids us measure by erring mortality, and pity while we condemn. However, I know you would rather have occasion to admire than to pity, when pity is to be alloyed with disesteem; therefore I am happy in the story of my young mariner, as he is yet a hero under all his misfortunes, to give you an object for both sentiments in their purest degree. Should he go to England, I will send him to you; and then I need not doubt all that has been represented to him of my country, being honoured to the word of your faithful friend.

LETTER XXXI.

Mosco, January, 1807

THE month of December has elapsed. What momentous tidings has it not brought to Russia! Even the inveteracy of a severe winter is no check to the persevering arms of the French nation. Prussia, with her ill advised policy, and as ill placed confidence, has paid dear for her affected neutrality and double conduct. The country, the army, and what few patriots stood forward in defence of their freedom, are all sacrificed.

The determined ambition of Bonaparte, and the gradual coming to maturity of his deep and widely grasping plans, have lit the torch of war on the frontiers of a deluded prince: and the blood of the people, with the extinction of their greatness, can alone extinguish the flame. Well might the fable of the Lion and the Beasts be applied to this conqueror. Many are invited to his court as friends, but when they reemerge, it is with mangled members. Friendship with the ambitious, is ever more destructive than their enmity. With an open foe we are prepared for injury; but who can guard against a false friend! And what sovereign ever yet found an ambitious monarch not ready to rise upon the necks of all his neighbours, whether enemies or allies? Bonaparte has evinced this spirit:

and wo to the next king who, with such an example as Prussia before him, submits to the yoke of his pretended friendship.* The sovereign that would be at peace, and maintain his dignity, must be able to control him. If a confederate nation be not beyond France in power it will soon be within its chains.

In the course of ten days, the military power of Prussia was annihilated; the duke of Brunswick killed; and a hundred thousand men lost and taken prisoners. French bayonets glittered in the heart of the kingdom. Berlin, Stettin, Custrine, and Magdeburgh, were garrisoned with the troops of France; and cowardice, bribery and treachery, spread themselves over the country. So many betrayed, that all feared to trust; and thus every individual fell an easy prey into the iron grasp of the conqueror.

The only resource left for the unfortunate Frederick, was to throw himself upon the generosity of the emperor of Russia; and, with the shattered remnant of his once great army, implore his protection. Indeed, so hot was the pursuit directed against him, that, at the head of not more than twenty thousand men, he found he had retreated so near to the confines of Russia, that the enemy now stood in check. Alexander's troops had already moved towards the Vistula to cover the remains of unhappy fugitive Prussia. The monarch who had been duped by the flattery of Bonaparte, and the corruption of his own ministers, now saw his error too late; and hailed the approach of his deliverers with the liveliest expressions of gratitude.

The energy with which reinforcements are collecting in the interior, is as surprising as admirable. All seem actuated by one spirit; and every district is busied in forming regiments for the new levies. So wide is the zeal, so general the detestation against the great usurper, that from the regions of Caucasus to the frontiers of China, little armies are pouring into Mosco, to be led against the universal enemy. Report says, that an army of four hundred thousand men from Russia, is

* The unhappy fate of the royal family of Spain is a striking example of this simple prediction. It was not read in the stars, but gathered from a common calculation on the tendency of human actions.—R. K. P. 1808

already opposed to the French legions. This may be exaggerated: but I know that a ukase has been issued, obliging the nobility to furnish peasants, to the additional amount of two hundred thousand, between St. Petersburgh and Kazan. Each proprietor is to furnish five soldiers out of every hundred slaves, with clothing, arms, and provisions for three months; and also provide pay during that time for each, at the rate of a ruble a month.

Measures of this strength are necessary, as they declare the determination of the emperor: they are not meant as a spur; for the energies of the nation are exerted with a promptitude which announces all hearts to be zealous in the same cause. Russia and England seem the only powers adequate to the contest; and indeed I may say, almost the only monarchs awake to the general danger. The others appear paralyzed, struck by an enchanter's wand; and to have already prostrated themselves at the feet of the despot. But on the reverse, all is alive in Russia; and to an Englishman, it is delightful to observe the abhorrence with which the nobility of this country speak of terms with the enemy; and with what enthusiasm they fly to execute their imperial master's orders. Meetings are daily held in the great *Salle de Noblesse;* and the proceedings there appear more like the privileged reasonings of a British parliament, than the discussions of a feudal assembly. And, thank heaven, success opens to them new inducements for unrelaxed vigour. A victory has been gained, and eleven thousand of the enemy have fallen. General Kamenskoy was first appointed to the command of the victorious division; but owing to his illness, he was obliged to resign in favour of general Benningsen; a native of Hanover, and lately governor of that district of Russian Poland which lies near Warsaw.

Every thing gives place to spirit stirring war. Instead of parties, concerts, and assemblies, I am invited to parades and reviews. The drawing rooms of my friends are filled with officers in uniform; and the streets swarm with soldiers. A few days ago I was gratified by seeing a most interesting body of troops march through the city, and which are never summoned by the emperor but upon extraordinary occasions. The

whole of these auxiliaries might amount to the number of fifteen thousand men. The first were called Baschkirs.

They are a people who derive themselves from a race of Tartars called Tschalmates, who, in former times, used to reside on the Kama. The name of Baschkir is rather a term of opprobrium, given to them by their neighbours, signifying wolf, from their propensity to plunder. Their acknowledged country now is amongst the Oural mountains, extending down to the Tartar deserts, on the borders of the rivers Ouy and Tobal. They formerly roamed about the southern Siberia, under the conduct of their chiefs. But to avoid the molestation of the Siberian khans, they settled in their present possessions; spreading themselves along the banks of the rivers Volga and Oural, and subjecting themselves to the Kazanian khanate. On the overthrow of that state by the tzar Ivan Vasilleivitch II. they made a merit of necessity, and accepted the protection of the Russian sceptre.

In the year 1770, they consisted of twenty-seven thousand families. Every tribe chooses its own ruler, who is called the Starchinis: it is long since they relinquished the privilege of being governed by a khan. The houses, or huts, which they inhabit during winter, are built in the fashion of the Russian villages. The principal part, which the family possesses, is furnished with large benches, used either as seats or beds. The chimney is of a conical form, about five feet high; and is in the middle of the apartment. The house is usually filled with smoke: and by all descriptions, the economy of the whole place must much resemble an Irish cabin.

In summer, the Baschkirs inhabit tents covered with felt, which, like the huts, have divisions, and a chimney in the centre. A winter village contains from ten to fifty houses; but a summer encampment never exceeds twenty tents. The most opulent are those who dwell to the east of Oural and the province of Iaset. Some individuals of this nation are owners of not less than four thousand horses, who fatten on the richest pastures in the valley till the month of June; when the wasps and other insects drive them into the mountains, there to keep *spare fast* and *diet with the gods*, till July recals them to the plains.

Like the patriarchs of old, the principal wealth of this people consists in their flocks and herds; but, what may appear very extraordinary, it is chiefly from their horses that they derive the necessaries of life; meat, milk, vessels, and garments.

Primitive as these manners may seem, they are not without education; as there are few Baschkirs who cannot write and read. With some knowledge of tillage, they yet prefer the pastoral life, which, though it may be contemplative employment, is certainly very likely to prove a lazy one. Sowing but little grain, their harvest must be very insufficient for their wants. However, they supply them in various other ways, and particularly by the traffic of honey. They apply with great success to the propagation of bees, making their hives in hollow trees for the safer protection from wild animals and accidents. Frequently one man is the possessor of five or six hundred of these little industrious commonwealths. I am ignorant of the Baschkir mode of taking the honey; but from the value they affix to the bees, I hope it is by a more humane method than that of smothering.

The women employ themselves in weaving, fulling, and dyeing narrow coarse cloths; they likewise make the clothes for the whole family. The men, of the laborious classes, follow the harder toil of fabricating felts and tanning leather. Both sexes wear linen spun from the down of nettles; and they cover their limbs with wide drawers which descend to the ancle. On their feet they wear the usual eastern slipper. All this is enveloped in a long gown, generally red, bordered with fur, and fastened round the waist with a girdle, in which is placed the dagger or scimitar. The lower orders, in winter, have a pelisse of sheep skins; the higher ranks wear a horse skin, in such a manner, that the mane flows down their backs, and waves in the wind. Their cap is cloth and of a conical shape, sometimes ornamented with fur, and sometimes plain, according to the wealth of the owner. This is their ordinary clothing. The garments of the women in the superior classes, are of silk, buttoned before as high as the neck; and fastened by a broad steel girdle. Their bosoms and throats are wrapped in a shawl, hung with strings of beads, shells, and even coins. Their diver-

sions are circumscribed to religious ceremonies, births, marriages and burials; and a few other festivals peculiar to themselves. Their modes of rejoicing are, drinking plentifully of sour milk; (a beverage I have no ambition to partake in!) singing, dancing and horse racing. In their songs they enumerate the achievements of their ancestors, or their own; and sometimes interrupt their epic, by amatory ditties. Their songs are always accompanied by gestures; which add much to their expression and effect. Their dancing is like that still practised by the common people of Russia to their Belloryicha (or lute), every one making strange faces, (perhaps the sour milk occasions these!) with as strange gesticulations of the hands, shoulders and hips. The motion of the feet is very gentle; and the women, while thus contorting themselves, hold a long silk handkerchief in their hands, which they cast about most wantonly. The use of the handkerchief is still preserved in Russia; and amongst the more refined movements of the nobility is transformed into the graceful exercise called the shawl dance.

The Baschkir soldiers are skilful in managing the bow, and are dexterous horsemen. The military service they are obliged to perform, as a tribute to Russia for her protection, consists in sending three thousand troops at least to the field, on the first summons from the emperor. They do not seem to consider this as a yoke; but march forward with the cheerfulness of a people undertaking a voluntary campaign. They possess the Spartan virtue of being particularly respectful to old age. In all entertainments, the aged occupy the seats of honour; and as a compliment to strangers, they are placed next to the venerable fathers. The language of the Baschkirs is a Tartar dialect, but very different from that spoken at Kazan. They are Mahometans, and much addicted to all the superstitions of the east.

As this strange people marched forward, I was so struck by their appearance, so peculiar, grand and picturesque; so totally different from any thing in our quarter of Europe, that I thought myself transported back many centuries. I was viewing the armies of Tschinghis-Khan, or Tamerlane! In short, I could not believe the scene to belong to the present times; and every

object conspired to preserve the illusion. The men were cased in shirts of mail, with shining helmets; and armed with long pikes, adorned at the top with various coloured pennons. Their other weapons were swords, bows and arrows; each sheaf of the latter containing twenty-four. The bows were short, and of the Asiatick form and materials, not well made; neither were their arrows carefully feathered, or straight. Yet, in spite of these disadvantages, their dexterity in shooting at a distance, or at objects in rapid motion, is amazing.

At the head of each squadron was carried a large standard of a forked shape. Some were green, charged with gold figures of curious forms, embroidered on the stuff. Others were of red or white cloth with a single A in the centre. These people were generally robust, and of various strange physiognomies: and besides Baschkirs, many succeeding squadrons were composed of large detachments from the Bucharian, Kalmuc, and other Tartar hordes.

Their horses are small, and though hardy and active, not a hair more sightly than those used by the Cossacs. This little army was led on by two chiefs in very superb habits. A bright coat of mail highly polished, covered their body to the middle of the thigh. A well constructed helmet guarded the head, accompanied by an equally ingenious protection for the neck. A scarlet kaftan hung from their shoulders down on the backs of two of the finest Persian horses I ever beheld: these, and the leopardskin shubrach (or saddle covering), gave a magnificence to their appearance, and a union of effect which my little sketch will perhaps convey.

After the corps were passed, I called in at the governor-general's; where I had the good fortune to meet with the commander of the Baschkirs, and to be introduced to him. His conversation was highly interesting; and as he satisfied my perhaps troublesome curiosity, on the subject of his people, he delivered his replies with the most complacent goodnature. His military band was ordered into the apartment, the odd instruments of which were not a little entertaining. They played on a sort of rude pipe, made of a hollow stick, about two feet long, and pierced with four holes. Independent of the *music it*

discoursed, they accompanied the notes with a noise made in their throats; uttering sounds in unison, but resembling the tones of a bird organ played under water. The means of producing this inward piping must be very painful, as the practitioner holds his breath for so long a time that the blood rushes rapidly into his face, and every muscle seems distended to torture. There was harmony certainly in the music, but no beauty; wildness, but no pathos. In short, take it all in all, it was unlike any thing you ever heard, excepting (if you ever did meet so odd a union!) the tones of a bad eolian harp, accompanied by the drones of an old bagpipe. It was too dull to laugh at: and instead of inspiriting the soldiers thus led to the field, I should think it very likely to drawl them to sleep. I was very glad to turn from so tiresome a lullaby, to the voice of my intelligent Baschkir; and to hear him speak of the merits of his troops, with a brave confidence honourable both to commanders and men.

And to be sure, these troops may do very well when opposed to their neighbours of a similar discipline; but when competitors with the veteran French, I fear they will make a very sorry stand.

Yesterday a new body of a different race, marched through. They are the Kirghises, the ancient enemies of the Baschkirs: but now, forgetting former feuds, under the broad banner of Russia, they assemble together against the common foe. During the reign of the empress Anne, this powerful people (being a nation on the borders of China) committed themselves to the protection of Russia; and by their numbers and bravery much facilitated the commerce and strengthened the frontiers of the empire. They are a warlike people; supposed to be descended from the Sarmates, a race who came originally from the East; and who, both under their ancient appellation, and the more modern one of Kirghises, held the Chinese in awe, and more than once shook that wonderful power to the foundations.

Their territories, in which they have numerous towns, extend from the river Oural and the Caspian Sea eastward as far as the Irtish, and the Altay mountains, the natural wall of China. The sea of Oral, and Buckkaria bound them to the

south. This once formidable people, now become the auxiliaries of Russia, did not appear better appointed for efficiency against European troops, than the Baschkirs. They were armed with bows and arrows, and badly mounted. Their clothes were of the Eastern fashion, with blue kaftans and caps of various forms, some furred, and others plain, of the Chinese shape. The Kirghises resemble their neighbours of China in the character of their faces, as well as in complexion and features.

The troops were divided into bands of a hundred men. At the head of each, an officer carried its respective standard; not much unlike, both in colour and pattern, a common checquered silk handkerchief; but forked with points of a distinct dye. To every pike was also suspended a small pennon, serving to mark the division to which each individual was attached. The effect of all these standards recalled to my recollection the procession in *Blue Beard*, where there are almost as many ensigns of command, as men to command.

Then followed a very fine corps indeed: the Kalmucs, who are some of the best disciplined troops in the Russian service. They sprung from the Huns; a people, who, many years after the descent of the Sarmates, overwhelmed the neighbouring nations of Russia. But why should I tell you who and what they were? when every schoolboy knows their origin; since, like the burner of the temple at Ephesus, they gave themselves to everlasting remembrance by the subversion of the Roman empire, under their conquering Attila.

The Mongoles, or Kalmuc Tartars, were descended of this victorious race: and marching from their patriarchal seat on the borders of China, towards the Oral and Caspian Seas; they subdued the inhabitants of that vast tract of country; and mingling with the natives, in the course of time were so altered from their ancient manners, as to lose all apparent traces of their origin. Among the hives which they subjugated and incorporated with themselves under the general name of Kalmuc Tartars, were the Turkomanes and the Kumenæs pitched near the Caspian Sea; and several Sarmatian and Scythian swarms which dwelt more to the northward. These all made one people under the great Tschinghis-Khan; and following his

conquering banner, overran Buckkaria, Persia and all China. Their next spoils were to be found in Russia: and owing to the continued feuds between the separate princes, it became an easy prey to the victorious khan. In short, from the year 1223, when the prince of Kief sacrificed the empire to his jealousy, to that of 1554, did the Russians groan under the Tartar yoke. But at that memorable period, the valiant arm of Ivan the Terrible not only gave freedom to his country, but destroyed the Golden Horde of the Kalmucs, the seat of the khans, pursued the remnants of their power to Kazan and Astrakhan; and laying both cities in ruins, for ever after annihilated the sovereignty of Tartary. From that hour, instead of being the lords of Russia, the Kalmucs are its tributaries; and one of the marks of their subjection, is the duty of attending the tzar in his wars.

If we be sensible to reflective awe, when standing over the ruins of some ancient magnificent structure; we cannot, on the same principle, behold the wreck of a once powerful empire passing by, without feeling a respectful veneration for its former greatness. These were my sentiments during the Tartar procession; and their consequent suggestions cost me some sighs, when I thought on what a *baseless fabric* rest all the glories of this world. The ambition of human nature, that never dying aspiration of the soul for fame (which is only another shape in which the principle of a *ceaseless longing after immortality* clothes itself) starts, when suddenly struck with the transitory existence of sublunary advantages. But half an hour's reflection makes one smile at these regrets: and so, instead of occasional thought decking me with the dismal visage of the weeping philosopher, it always sends me out of school under Democritus's colours. If this be not the effect of all thinking, it is but grave trifling: and if philosophy, *divine philosophy!* find not *good in every thing*, it loses its epithet, and is not worth a rush.

But a truce to moralizing, and again to my Kalmucs. I inclose you a sketch of their figures and physiognomy; and I assure you I have not caricatured the latter in the least. The strong line of their eyebone is far more perpendicular than that of the Chinese. Hence we must suppose, if Tschingis-Khan

and the renowned Tamerlane resembled their descendants, that Venus here showed her old enmity against the warlike Minerva, in the persons of her favourites; and while the one was blessed with the courage of Mars, the other was cursed with the aspect of Vulcan. So much for the Tartarian heroes. Being perhaps well tired of their company, they shall make you their bow, with the temporary adieu of your very faithful friend.

LETTER XXXII.

St. Petersburgh, April, 1807.

HAVING to fulfil my engagements with the admiralty, after many an anxious day, I left Mosco for St. Petersburgh late in February, and arrived here early in March. In that hospitable capital I had passed hours which endeared every stone to my remembrance: and the inhabitants! how shall I cease to speak of them, who were to me as the kindest friends; and of some still more beloved, who blessed me with every heartfelt delight that renders England dear!

I have left Mosco for a short season I hope: but when I return, it will not be to meet all whom I valued there. One, the most venerable of my friends; one, whose doors were ever open to me; whose tenderness cherished me as a parent, is gone! Removed to her heavenly country; there to receive the reward of her virtues; the happiness allotted to the benefactress of the wretched, and the refuge of them who have no home.

A few weeks before I quitted Mosco, died this revered woman. The instant I was apprised of the event, I hastened to her palace. During her severe illness, those whom she honoured with her affection were seldom absent from her couch or antichamber. But let death strike when it will, the blow always surprises the heart of a friend. Hope lingers for those we love, even till the moment life is extinguished. The real sorrow that met my eyes on being led into the saloon where she lay, is more than I can utter; but I felt it all. The room was filled with hi-

shops and priests, and tender relations, chanting the requiem, and praying for the departed soul. The last time I had entered this state apartment it was then decorated for a ball; the walls blazed with myriads of gay lights: the roof resounded with music and the dance; and beauty, smiles, and splendor, beamed around. The venerable and illustrious mistress of the *fête*, she too was there, and sat amidst the general festivity, enjoying with an amiable complacency the pleasures she diffused. All now was changed! I returned to the same chamber, but, O, my God! under what different feelings, and for what a different purpose! My soul was ten thousand times more wrought upon, than if I could have shed torrents of tears. The colour of mourning covered the walls, funeral tapers gleamed from the hands of the priests, and the draperies of a vast pall met my feet: where then was she whose maternal smiles had always greeted my entrance? Bitter, bitter was that moment! It is the survivor's heart that pays the tax of death, not his who dies.

Many around me were weeping heavily: but the friend of my soul, the living representative of the departed Saint, stood like a fixed statue of grief. The coffin was blessed by the bishops; the holy water bedewed it, and the shrouded body of the best and most revered of women was deposited in it for ever, at least for that *ever* which belongs to time, until the day which closes time's existence, and awakens man to the eternity of heaven! The sight of that lifeless form called forth all that was woman in me. My gratitude, my sorrow, almost turned me Greek; and hardly could I forbear falling on my knees, and joining in their prayers to the divine mercy for her peace and everlasting happiness.

I afterwards saw her laid in the tomb: and as the earth closed over her, the remembrance of all that she had been to me, of all that she had blessed me with, of the precious part of her being, that was to be mine for ever; made me feel indeed a son, and more than filial tears bedewed her grave. Think then, my friend, with what sentiments I left Mosco. Think how impatient I am to return to it, with that imperial sanction to my wishes, which will turn the house of mourning into that of joy!

To perform my promise, and to obtain a greater, I came to St. Petersburgh. But, on the very day in which I entered it, the sublunary lord of my fate, the emperor, left it. This was a new blow to me. I had no resource but patience, and to await his return from the frontiers. Meanwhile, I am employing every hour in the fulfilment of my admiralty engagements, that I may throw myself upon his goodness with a better grace. He was gone to join the army: proving, by every act, how true he is to the cause; when he not only directs the helm of war, but exposes his person to its hottest balls.

On my arrival, I found our new ambassador the marquis of Douglas; and a political scene, somewhat different from that of Mosco. All there was arms and glory: but here commercial interest a little diluted the ardour of the people. The treaty of commerce with England had expired; and no hopes were entertained of its being renewed. The absence of the emperor, besides many obstacles in the imperial cabinet, traversed the unremitted exertions of our ambassador; nothing satisfactory on this head could be obtained. And indeed it is hardly to be expected that the leaders of the Russian commercial department, having learnt the value of their own commerce, and the manner of carrying it on; will again put such advantages out of their own hands. The native merchants have been our apprentices for near three hundred years; so we must not be surprised they should now wish to set up for themselves, and reap the fruit of their own vineyard. To encourage them, is the interest of the nobles, whose vassals they in general are; and to see them prosperous is the delight of the monarch: for, considering himself the father of all his people, the happiness of the lower ranks is not less his object than that of the higher. And to show the trading part of his subjects the respect in which they should in future be held, a little while ago he gave them a magnificent dinner, at which he presided in person; and on leaving the apartment, presented each with a medal of himself, reversed with emblems of commerce. At present, the two great civic aims of this august monarch, are, to give gradual freedom to the vassals of the empire; and to establish its commerce on a wide and firm foundation. None can contemplate these pro-

jects without admiring the patriotic Alexander; and congratulating the people who are so happy as to be under his sway.

Indeed, the difference between him and his immediate predecessor must, to persons who have lived under both reigns, appear a translation from hell to heaven. The one seemed guided by a caprice alone; the other always under the direction of right reason. Not an hour ago, I met in the street, one of the existing mementos of the emperor Paul's extravagances. During one of that monarch's visits to the dockyards, he observed a boor calking the bottom of a ship with great diligence. "That seems a very clever fellow!" observed the emperor. And drawing towards him, he examined his work with the most delighted scrutiny.

"Admirably calked!" cried he, "you must be rewarded for this."

The man, expecting a few rubles, prostrated himself in gratitude before his sovereign. "Rise, rise;" cried the monarch; "I confer on you the rank of lieutenant-general!" certainly a lord high admiral would have been more in character with his marine employment. But the poor fellow sprung on his feet in a rapture; and, I am not sure whether he did not embrace the emperor. However, this did not satisfy Paul; but having him instantly clothed in the uniform belonging to his new dignity, he threw over his neck the badges of several military orders! The calker was now made a lieutenant-general, but unmade as a rational creature. So great was his ecstacy at this flood of honours, that his reason was overset; and ever after he lived a sad monument of human folly and human weakness. Yet I know not whether he is to be considered as a pitiable object either; for he seems perfectly happy. He has a handsome pension settled on him for life; and passes his time in walking about the streets of St. Petersburgh in full military dress, decorated with his stars and ribbons; and accosting every man of rank he meets with the intimate salutation of a brother. It is pleasing to see how blest he considers himself with the possession of his knighthoods, although he purchased them at the expense of his wits. And indeed, when we consider the low situation from which the late emperor elevated him, it is ten to

one but his insanity has saved him a thousand mortifications from the disdain of his now equals. It is evident from the effect of his new dignity, that he was a proud man; and therefore, had he preserved his senses, and met with contempt, it is most probable that he would have soon ended his *generalized* career with a broken heart.

I had the honour of being presented to this curious personage, when I was last at the residence: and this morning, passing along the street, he descried me at a little distance; and hastily crossing the way, embraced me with open arms. The greeting, "I am happy to see your *excellency* looking so well!" covered his rough features with smiles; and waving his head to and fro, as if all the dignities of the world were plumed there; he talked with me, to my own door, as familiarly of counts and princes, as if he had been born their equal, and had passed his life in their councils. This little anecdote is a sufficient specimen of the mad caprice of the late monarch, and of its ridiculous and mischievous consequences.

I am at present so thoroughly engaged in finishing my pictures for the admiralty, that you must not be surprised at the curtailed size of my letters; for, every time I dip my pen in ink to you, I rob the commemoration of the *glories of Peter the Great*, of a few of its rays. In short, if I do not sit close to them (so many other objects press upon my attention), I fear they will be most shamefully *shorn of their beams:* but remember, I mean to say, that Peter's actions give their own light: my hand, by restoring them to the eye, merely puts aside the clouds with which time had obscured their brightness.

My portrait of the tzar is finished, and already deposited in the great saloon of the hermitage, until that of the admiralty be prepared for its reception. At present I have the defeat of admiral Emshield, &c. &c. to complete: and being engaged in so many formidable achievements, will be a sufficient apology for the hasty adieu of your ever faithful friend.

LETTER XXVIII.

St. Petersburgh, October, 1807.

AFFAIRS of the greatest moment to your friend have kept his journalising pen in its case during these many months: but you are too well informed of them, to need any apology for not transmitting a history of the public disasters which have so heavily struck at my private peace.

The whole cry here is the nonarrival of our troops off Dantzic; and he who till then greeted every Englishman as a brother, now turns from even a friend of that nation with a cold bow of suspicion. The battle of Friedland has been lost, the treaty of Tilsit signed, and the whole face of affairs entirely changed. I could hardly believe that I am awake, did I not feel in every nerve the alteration which stabs my happiness. I see two countries that I love, on the point of variance: I see more in prospect than my heart at present can bear to dwell on.

The French general is in St. Petersburgh as ambassador. He carries himself with all the gorgeous parade of the court he represents; and drives about in an equipage more becoming an eastern satrap than a hardy soldier. Splendid as his externals may be, I cannot find a similar refinement in his manners. I was told that the other day he dined in company where some of our countrymen were present. The conversation fell on military affairs. Egypt was mentioned; and an English gentleman, meaning to do a courtesy to the French general, paid some compliments to the conduct of Menou at Alexandria.

"Ay," cried the Frenchman, "but had one of Napoleon's boats been there, Alexandria had never fallen to the British."

What Englishman's blood did not rise at this reply? and what ought to have been the silencing answer?

"Where then were these mighty boats that Napoleon did not bring them to the siege of Acre?"

No response could be made to this: and the blushes of every Frenchman present were not requisite to declare the mortifying consciousness that their emperor had been *beaten*, and by

an *Englishman*. The man still lived who had made him fly; who had driven him from the holy land he had polluted with apostacy; and who, by that heaven directed action, locked the gates of the east against his menaced usurpations! As the proud duke of Austria trembled before the name of the *first Cœur de Lion*, the no less haughty emperor of the French must ever start at that of the *second*.

You will be surprised that I should be unable to say much of the French general, from my own personal knowledge: he possessed no magnetic powers over me, and therefore I kept as due a distance as I liked.

My lord Gower (having succeeded the marquis of Douglas, now gone into the interior to visit Mosco), received a note from the government, intimating, that as a British ambassador he was no longer necessary at the court of St. Petersburgh. Every thing is now preparing for his departure; and consequently, as the French interest is gaining ground, the British declines. All of our nation are eager to leave the country. Changed indeed is the face of things! But as it is the general idea that the new amity cannot last, and as abiding in the empire, under my peculiar circumstances, would militate against my feelings as an Englishman, who considers the duties he owes his king, and his own character as a loyal Briton, as paramount to all other interests; I shall make the earliest application for my passports.

November.

Since I wrote the above, the new ambassador has arrived from Paris to replace the old, who returns to his master. This man is even less polished than his predecessor, or else a bolder professor of the law which makes all means admissible to serve a desired end. Indeed, so little decency has he in vaunting his bloody deeds, that when a lady of rank, the other day, asked him how he could get any person hardhearted enough to shoot the duke d'Enghein, he replied with the greatest coolness, "O madam, I took care of that." With neither of these diplomatic gentlemen have I any acquaintance; so, my dear friend, you

must excuse me sending you no better specimens of their merits.

In the midst of these political revolutions, which are on the point of dividing me for a time from the object most precious to me on earth, I have received the painful intelligence of the death of my illustrious friend, the venerable prince Gallitzen. Of such stuff is this life composed! Separations! Deaths! They are hard tugs upon the heart. But Hope, my friend, that smiling angel, looks in; and Despair, just lowering over the soul, is put to flight. I thank God for having given her to me as a sweet comforter through all my ills: and even under this heavy disappointment, when the rupture between two mighty nations opens a gulf between me and my happiness; even now she promises brighter days to come, and I find the pangs of separation less intolerable.

This seems the very season of affliction. The poor queen of Georgia has also breathed her last sigh. The prince Bagration was of her family; and during her seclusion in Russia, she felt herself still a sovereign, while listening to accounts of the commanding virtues of her kinsman. She was to be buried with a pomp suitable to her rank; and I went to the great perspective to be a spectator of the ceremony.

The emperor and the grand-duke, with the court, attended; and also a procession of four thousand men, with twelve pieces of cannon, and their military bands. The solemn tones of the dirges, and the awful response of the minute guns as the line proceeded, had a very striking effect. The rich habits of the bishops and priests, with those of the imperial family and the court, and the long blackrobed mutes bearing torches, by the extraordinary variety and mingling of the gay colours of life, with the mourning hues of death, increased the reflections of the observer, and deepened the melancholy of the scene.

The coffin, covered with a magnificent pall, was borne on a bier, and supported by ten men in military habits. Over their heads a canopy was carried, feathered and crowned according to her royal dignity. Several noblemen preceded and followed the body, bearing on embroidered cushions the various insignia of a sovereign. Thus passed the queen of Georgia! The scene

was fraught with such food for meditation; and meditations which, in these portentous times, are so Cassandra-like in their prognostics, that I hurried from the church, quite in the dismals, to talk over the past, present, and to come, with my dear Mosco friend, now arrived in St. Petersburgh.

My pictures I had finished. They were deposited in the hermitage with that of Peter the Great; and I now only waited for my passport to carry me across the frontiers into Sweden. It was the depth of winter, and I ordered the necessary equipages for that sort of travelling. The passport was sent to me. All was now closed with me in Russia, except to take my leave of the imperial head of the court in which I had experienced so much kindness. I was received with a condescension that redoubled my every hope; and as I received the most gratifying marks of the amiable Alexander's approbation, and interest in my fate; I withdrew from his presence with sentiments of never dying respect and gratitude, and with the dear conviction that "it would not be long before peace would reunite the two countries, and bring me back to Russia and to happiness!"

That night I slept not. I passed it in the saloons of some of my best friends; and freighted with many a gentle sigh to distant England, I parted from some. But from others, than *friendship dearer!* their tears are yet upon my cheek: and the blessings of those whom heaven, by age, seems particularly to have consecrated to itself, still dwell on my head; and I trust were not breathed in vain.

The tenth of December, five in the morning! Remember that this day is the most fearful of his life to thy fortune-persecuted friend.

LETTER XXXIV.

Abo, December, 1807.

ON the tenth of December I left St. Petersburgh for Stockholm; having had a couple of kibitkas made on a lighter and larger construction than those used in Russia, and better adapted to the Swedish roads. One of these vehicles was for myself, and the other for my honest servant Gerard Schmidt. The hospitality and attention of my friends, provided me with every portable necessary for the journey; which at this season of the year is both tedious and dangerous.

I found the roads good; and got on very rapidly through Russian Finland. This part of the empire is flat and marshy; covered with huge masses of granite, standing so thick in some places, as at a distance to bear the appearance of considerable villages. These deceptions, no doubt, often occasion bitter disappointment to the foot traveller who, worn with fatigue and hunger, hopes a few steps farther to find rest and refreshment: but drawing near, meets an assemblage of solitary stones! Vast tracts of this country are thinly scattered with low and meagre fir-trees; the aspect, consequently, is very desolate; but whether it be really as bad as it seems, I will not pretend to say: for while the bosom of nature is so overspread with snow, it is impossible to form a right judgment of its cultivation.

The Finlanders are of a small stature, sharp featured, and usually without any apparent beard. They have light complexions; with fair hair, worn long and *uncombed* on each side of their head. Brown woollen kaftans short to the knee; with loose black pantaloons and boots, make up their apparel. Now and then, as a wonderful finery, a sort of worked decoration adorns their upper garments. Their caps are unvaryingly of the same shape. In short, seeing one Finlander is seeing them all; and my sketch is as like their rude exterior as if it had been cut out by one of their own taylors. A most barbarous animal, you will think I have made of the poor Fin: but I must say,

in excuse for so *inveterate a likeness*, that take them altogether, their appearance is ten times more savage than the grimmest Russian I ever met, wrapped like a wild beast in his hairy shoub. Certainly the description is not so bearish, but the reality would convince you at once of their hideous *tout ensemble;* to account for it, I refer you to better physiognomists in faces and garbs; for, that the Fins are so frightful,

> "The reason why, I cannot tell;
> But so it is, dear Doctor Fell!"

Viborg was the first town of any magnitude I passed through: and in that place I presented the governor with my passport, who countersigned it, and treated me very civilly. The town is a seaport, and the capital of a government which bears its name; it is also a bishop's see; and carries on a considerable trade with England. Peter the First took it from the Swedes in 1710, improved its fortifications, and Russia has ever since retained it as one of her strongest bulwarks against that brave people.

I found the inns large and dirty: a very usual property, you will think, of all receptacles for travellers on these northern roads. Ay, and on every road that I have travelled, southward, eastward, and westward, excepting England. Our little island possesses not a more striking characteristic than the cleanliness and comfort of its habitations, from the palace to the cot, inns, and even alehouses included.

The hotel of Viborg was rendered still more prolific in all manner of filthy abominations, by a party of soldiers quartered there; the whole city being filled with Russian troops. The villages around were likewise overflowing with this military flood, on its passage to the frontiers of Sweden. As I followed the track, I passed numerous regiments on their march: their cannon, war carriages, troops of Cossacs, and other accompaniments; sometimes proceeding in scattered parties, and at others, halting in groups of various positions, could not fail of producing picturesque and interesting scenes. Thirty thousand men, I am told, is the present Russian force in Finland. And to me it will be surprising, if they do not fall upon Sweden much sooner than that kingdom expects the attack.

On my approach to the borders, I found the country become hilly, and assume a more savage outline. The mountainous and rugged scenery of Salvator Rosa, will give you a very just idea of the face of this wild country. It is the very theatre in which a romance writer would place his supernatural visitants, or a painter his banditti. When the snow is off, I have no doubt that the return of warmer suns will crown many of these now barren rocks with a verdure, which, in some places, must soften into beauty their prevailing grandeur. The eye and the imagination, fatigued with a too prolonged gaze on gigantic nature, turn with delight to the little green valley, where some cottage lurks, embosomed in trees, promising rest and cheerfulness with its humility.

Aberforce is the last of the Russian possessions in this extensive province, which anciently was called Carelia; and now marks the boundary of the Russian empire on the side of Sweden. Here my baggage was examined, and all the imperial coin and paper money taken from me, for which I received Swedish in exchange. Having showed my passport to the commanding officer, and passed the lines, in a few minutes I was no longer in the territories of Alexander; I no longer breathed the air of the same empire with one, who was as part of my own being. Call me not romantic! but at that moment I found the pangs of separation renewed afresh; and had I not had the remembrance of the parting graciousness of its august monarch to quiet my anxieties, with what a redoubled gloom should I have prepared myself to encounter the gulf that was yet to divide me further! But Hope, my faithful ally, rose again before me; and I willingly followed her visionary flight, as I lay wrapped up in my kibitka, till she seemed to alight on the temple of Concord, and reunite the hands of Russia and England. Ah, my friend! had the shrewdest seer that ever pretended to read the stars, have told me three years ago, that the political conduct of two great empires, in the year 1807, would immediately influence my future fate, I should have laughed at so pompous a prediction for so insignificant a personage, and have told the prophet, that the storms on the mountains would never reach my humble dell. But so it is:

and peace or war opens to me all my joys, or shuts them from me, with bars more impenetrable than walls of iron.

Having left Aberforce, which is nothing more than a long line of hills, well defended with huge bulwarks of granite, I passed over a low piece of neutral territory, that in a few moments brought me to the Swedish frontiers. Here I found a very slender guard; and after the usual formalities, passed through them with great ease. I was rather surprised to find so slight a defence opposed to the coming enemy; but as I proceeded my astonishment increased, as I rarely saw any thing bearing the least affinity with arms: and when I recalled the large army I had just quitted, on the full march to overwhelm this country, I was totally at a loss how to account for so unguarded a security. Either the information they receive must be very bad, or some policy is carrying on beyond my comprehension; for, I cannot seriously suppose that Baron de Steddinge, the worthy representative of the royal Gustavus on the frontiers, would allow so hostile an appearance to escape his vigilance. Whatever may be the occult reason for the present tranquillity, all is at perfect rest in Swedish Finland. Liberty and comfort smile every where; peace sits on every countenance, and decorates the landscape, as if this had been her chosen reign for many a year. The view was delightful; and had I not been sure that Bellona was at my heels, ready to burn up their present and promised happiness, I might have enjoyed the scene; but the prospect of its impending destruction, like the *mystical lore* of the Scottish wizard, disturbed my fancy; and I was glad to press forward. —The means of travelling rapidly do not fall off in Swedish Finland. The horses are smaller than those on the Russian side; but their motion in descending the hills is so swift, as to be really terrific. Every thing seemed to partake of the activity of these animals; for although they were obliged to be sent for, at different stages, from the neighbouring boors, yet all was despatched with such promptitude that I was detained a very short time at the posthouses, and speeded on my journey almost as quickly as in England.

There is nothing particularly striking or singular in the

dress of the people. Their countenances resemble the lower class of Germans; and their manners are goodnatured, with a little alloy of inquisitiveness, which, though teasing to strangers, is a sign of their being on the alert; a sure promise of future improvement. Curiosity is the soil for a rich mental harvest: and where it is not, you may sow and sow; but it rots where it lies, having no vigour in the bed to change its state and excite it to fructify. It is a duty of a legislator to put to good use this propitious disposition in a people.

I cannot pass any encomiums on the towns and villages I travelled through in my way to Abo. The road leading to this city grows very hilly, and in the line of country strongly resembles the north of Ireland. Cultivation seems not to be neglected, for through the snowy veil which covered the face of the ground, I could perceive the signs of numerous inclosures, intersecting the valleys, and climbing up the sides of the hills. These divisions were marked with long thin bodies of felled trees, laid in an oblique direction, and supported at due distances by uprights of stronger wood, like the fences used in the northern parts of America.

Abo is a place of great repute, is considered the capital of Swedish Finland, and is situated in a hollow between two high and naked granite hills, on the point where the gulfs of Bothnia and Finland unite. The town has a good harbour, with every other maritime convenience. In 1620, that mirror of princes, the great Gustavus Adolphus, founded a gymnasium here, which his daughter the queen Christina, a few years afterwards changed into an academy, and endowed with the same privileges as Upsala. The only royal court of judicature in Finland is held at this place; and here the governor of the province usually resides. It is also a bishop's see. The church is large and of brick; built, they tell me, by a Metropolitan named Henry, who was an Englishman. I did not look at it with the less regard, you may believe, from these circumstances. The organ may be ranked amongst the best in Europe; its tones indeed equalled any I had ever heard: and as the notes of the singers accompanied them, I know not whether there were really a resemblance, or that the idea of the

founder put fancy in the place of fact into my head, but certainly I thought the voice of one of the choristers resembled the tones of one with whom you are very well acquainted; but he rose from his seat, and there ended the likeness. Surely nothing more quickly recals the images of the absent, than hearing tunes that they have admired, or sounds resembling their own voice. I started when I heard those in the church of Abo; and almost thought I was in the parlour in G——, listening to the air with which you sung the words of our favourite hero, *The plume of war, with early laurels crowned!* Nature, you see, is very consistent. What reminds travellers of their friends, recals exiles to their country: who can forget the power of the *Ranz des Vaches*, over the Swiss soldiers! And which of us Britons, were we even enjoying all the luxuries of life in a foreign clime, could suddenly hear the well known notes of *Rule Britannia*, and not feel his heart and soul fly back to England?

Having left the choir, I examined the monuments of the church; but met with little gratification, as they possessed no interest, except to the families whose relatives they cover. They are generally flat stones on the pavement, or against the walls, without graces, either of architecture or inscription. One I observed rather more eminent than the rest; and found it to be the last bed of general Wedderburn, a Briton who died in the service of Sweden about two centuries ago. I visited the university. The institution is admirable; and the new edifice for the use of the students is in great forwardness, and seems to promise both convenience and beauty. The streets of the town are narrow, and the houses generally built of wood, precisely in the common Russian style; differing only in the dear essentials of being always aired and clean. The river Aurojochi winds through the city to the gulf; and when the navigation is open, this is a place of considerable trade and consequence. During the period of traffic (when spring unlocks the seas), regular boats are kept for the purpose of conveying passengers and their equipages direct across to Stockholm; which short voyage generally lasts no longer than from fourteen to twenty-four hours. Thus gliding gently over the waves, the happy he

who travels under summer suns, avoids the inconveniencies of stoppages, the expensive wretchedness of the islands, and lands himself fresh and gay on the opposite shore.

The winter vehicles of this country differ materially from those of Russia, being extremely light, narrow and long, seldom shorter than ten feet. The person or persons sit in the centre; and he who drives stands behind: a seat is sometimes affixed, whereon the whip may sit if he pleases.

Having seen all worthy observation at Abo, although the Russ consul Mr. Brumm, and also the governor, to whom I brought letters, have behaved with the greatest attention to me; yet I shall remain as short a time as possible; being eager, by immediately facing the dangers of a passage through the gulf, to prevent the accumulation of more, and to get over the present collection, as fast as possible. I am told that Ulysses never met with more horrible perils amongst the isles of the Syrens, than I am to encounter amidst the isles of Bothnia. I fear they will be in less agreeable shapes than beautiful women; and expecting rather to meet with sea storms than sea nymphs, I commit myself to your orisons; hoping soon, from Stockholm, again to sign myself your faithful friend.

LETTER XXXV.

Warsala, Isles of Bothnia, December, 1807.

I AM now ingulfed, my good friend! When I shall set foot on *terra firma* again I cannot prognosticate. Nought is around me but shoals of ice and barren rocks: if I had an enemy wicked enough to enjoy my polar banishment, how happy would he be now! I am arrived to the very *acmé* of northern discomfort; and could scarcely be worse off were I encountering, with the unfortunate Ajust, the cimmerian depths of the Greenland seas. But I will not anticipate my narrative; in due order you shall have my exit from Abo.

Well then, on Monday morning, I, and my faithful Squire, sallied forth in our kibitkas towards Elsing, a village about six Swedish miles from Abo, and the last collection of houses that is resorted to by passengers taking the direct road across the gulf to Stockholm. Here I rested a little while to reconnoitre my movements; and so dreary was the prospect, and dismal the accounts which the natives gave of the voyage at this season of the year, that my impatience to reach the Sewdish capital, seemed hardly an excuse for the boldness of the enterprise. However, I had reason enough to determine me: Schmidt was willing to follow his master; and notwithstanding the fearful portents, we prepared to attempt the first island. What increased the hazard, was the unsettled state of the weather; which, freezing one hour, and thawing the next, rendered the greater part of the ice on the gulf too weak to bear our kibitkas, and yet too strong to allow of its being broken to admit the action of a boat. This representation did not quite convince me; and on inquiring further I was told, that on examining the passages, it was found that an intermingled fluid and frozen mode of conveyance might be possible.

I therefore sought for a part of the gulf hard enough to start from; and at last lit upon a pretty open space still in a liquid state, at some distance from which the ice seemed thick

enough to bear our weight. On the proclamation of this discovery, a number of villagers of both sexes turned out to escort and assist us over. Each was provided with an iron pointed staff; and some carried the addition of a hammer-headed ax, in order to sound the way, or to break the ice when necessary. My kibitkas were each placed in a separate boat, and our little troop embarked with them. A short time brought us to the frozen part on which I had fixed my eye; the natives got out first to try its strength, but to my no small disappointment, found it so weak that it hardly bore themselves. Their only resource for me, was to break a passage, by means of their axes and the prow of the first vessel: and this they did with most indefatigable labour, till we penetrated through the midst of the congealed plain to the distance of three quarters of an English mile.

During this toil, we had a tremendous gale of wind, attended by so piercing a sleet, that the breaking up of the surrounding ice was threatened, which must have inevitably ingulfed us all, most seriously ingulfed! for my companions expected no less, for some dreadful hours, than that the bursting and rushing ice would overwhelm us for ever. However, we found the frozen fluid grow stronger as we drew nearer the island; and it soon, most happily, allowed us to haul the sledges from the boats, and proceed, if not on firm land, on firm ice, towards the shore.

With the men and women dragging the sledges (on which you must remember our kibitkas are fastened), and at every yard, striking our footing, to sound its thickness; after a cold, wet and benumbing perambulation, we at length reached Warsala. But what did we meet? not the warm comforts which would have cheered us from even the wave beaten cottage of a poor Scot, had we landed in a rough night on one of our stormy Hebrides; but such chilling wretchedness, such dirt and penury were exhibited here, that I had much ado to persuade myself not to prefer returning to the dangers of the gulf, before passing a night in so miserable a spot. But had I decided so, my conveyors would not; and forced to be resigned to what

was inevitable, I entered a hovel, fitter to be the den of sea monsters than a habitation for the human race.

The hire claimed by my Finlanders for their aquatic services, was three rix dollars,—a tolerable sum, though hardly earned; for, certainly, their labour, and the risques they ran, would have been ill paid by thrice as much. But danger is their harvest. During the perilous state of the waters at this season of the year, the demands of the islanders for any exertion of this kind, are seldom so moderate. The price they claim being totally of their own fixing, impositions, and every act of knavery towards the poor traveller, are commonly the practice. Their artifices, and the ignorance of foreigners in the language of the country, and the uncertain value of the current money, all conspire to fill the purses of the natives, and to empty those of the unlucky wayfaring strangers.

Having got over the dreary night in this noisome place, I found, to my no small discomfiture, that to stir the next day was impossible. The ice, all around, was in a worse state than on the preceding evening. That day passed, and another, and another; and still no hope. Every morning I ordered the ice to be tried; and every morning I returned from the experiment, musing on the blessing of patience.

What little strength the element possessed lay on the Elsing side, for two or three other travellers arrived, to increase the wants of our houseless and famishing garrison. This island, like most others in its neighbourhood, is nothing more than a huge rock, thinly covered with a meager soil, hardly sufficient to yield the inhabitants a little grass as a gala treat for a cow, or as much pulse for themselves as will sustain nature. There are not more than twenty-five habitations in the whole island. These are divided into two groups of hovels on separate parts of the rock, and comprise all the population and accommodation of the place. Each house that pretends to any eminence over the rest (which are only a couple of posthouses), possesses a windmill close to its side; and within, consists of one large kitchen, which is refectory, dormitory, and as many etceteras as you choose to add to its capabilities. Here the family, day and night (and other live stock besides), all pig together; leaving

a better room, with one solitary bed in it, as a reserve for travellers. Think then, with two such miserable hotels in the whole island, what is the distress when perhaps half a dozen parties are weatherbound here for weeks!

The wherewithal to satisfy hunger, is simple and circumscribed; viz. black bread, with a most nauseous beer; and by way of luxury, a little bad salt fish: the less the better! you will say; and I am so perfectly of your mind, that had I been doomed to such provender, I must have contented myself with their Spartan bread alone; for I most assuredly would have left the beer and the fish, either to their more Hottentot appetites, or as a peace offering to my jailers, the waves. Hence you see the necessity, on one of these voyages, to be provided with every thing in the provision way; even to loading your kibitka with as weighty burthens as accompanied Sir Francis Wronghead's journey to London. My stock, both of aliments and patience, was wearing out so fast, that I thought it expedient to dare another trial on the gulf. I knew if I waited till we might embark without any danger, I should remain in Warsala till the spring; and therefore, determining to make the essay next morning, I called my servant to prepare for a second launching.

My host, an old rascally postmaster, who preferred our dollars before his own honesty, after having imposed upon us by his extortions, now sought to intimidate me from proceeding, by a thousand lies. However, I was resolved; and engaging to give the peasants a very handsome price for their assistance, attended by Schmidt, and my train dragging the boats and kibitkas after us, I set off early in the morning, wrapped in my Russian shoub, and walking many miles up to my knees in water on the ice. At a certain spot we entered the boats, and got on a little way; or rather I should say, got into a labyrinth of iceshoals and impediments of every kind. Here we beat about for several hours, and at last, as ill luck would have it, or as if some malignant fate destined me to perish in this loathsome island; after all the labour, danger and pain we had undergone, I was obliged to return to Warsala in the middle of the night following, wet, benumbed and sulky.

Here then I am again, with the happy prospect of passing,

Heaven knows how many, more days in cold, filth and famine! I wish the sea would, some time or other, do this island the favour of a thorough washing; and then, I am sure, more living creatures of the *creeping* and *jumping* species would be drowned in the flood, than ever filled the waters at the general deluge. I can safely say that the sort of *evils* which annoy me here,

Come not in single spies; but in battalions!

Happy are those beings who bring into the world such hardihood of the senses, that they can as pleasantly encounter a common sewer as a bed of flowers; or sleep in a pigsty as comfortably as on a clean mattrass! Cleanliness, you will readily believe, is the chief of the *dii penates* I worship in my travels. Give me clean straw, clean water, and a clean crust, and I could voyage it from the zenith to the nadir without a murmur: but nastiness is as bad to me, as the spear in the faces of the young Romans: when it appears, I could gladly turn my back.

On my return to the island, I found a very worthy countryman of our own, who had been there fourteen days before I first arrived; who remained the following eight in which I was imprisoned; and who like myself, is now threatened with perhaps other eight or fourteen more, to be enjoyed in this delectable spot! While my patience was oozing out at every pore, he sat contentedly, smiling at my disappointment, and trying to argue me into the belief that dirt was no evil. He then good-humoredly laughed at his own rhetoric; and bringing me to acknowledge, that in certain cases, delicacy, or even regard for common decency, was no good, I became a little better reconciled to endure.

From the masculine vocations of the females here, their persons, of course, cannot be of the loveliest mould. Active as men, they are as robust; and soon lose the tender complexion of their own sex, in the rough exterior of ours. They work like horses, both winter and summer, in assisting travellers to pass, by this route, to Stockholm; and you will see them for hours up to their middle in the snow water, and tugging at the boats or sledges, without present fatigue or after injury.

Their dress consists of a woollen bedgown of gay colours in stripes; their stockings are commonly either blue or red, with

slippered shoes. But the part of their toilet which soonest strikes a stranger's eye, is the headdress. I am told it is peculiar to this island; and indeed it is by no means devoid of taste. The hair must be drawn up to the top of the head, and there rolled into a sort of knot; being smoothed at the sides, and well plastered with beer, it not only receives a polish from the fluid, but is kept steady in its shape. Round this mass of hair, on the crown, is fixed a kind of diadem composed of beads, bugles, &c. of various colours; which ornament completes the coiffure: the whole having the air of a Greek headdress, more like a nymph of Paphos than of Warsala; and which, were it on a truly feminine and beautiful woman, would look remarkably graceful and becoming.

At last, thank God! a frost promises in earnest. We are going to try our fortune; and have every prospect now, of bidding this blessed island a long adieu! My dear friend, wish us good speed; and I will hail you from the next.

January, 1808.

The attempt was made. The old adage led us on, "success rewards the brave!" and under its cheering banner, the whole village turned out as usual; and being provided with boats, &c. we once more said farewel to Warsala, and committed ourselves to the gulf. We passed over six English miles of ice with safety and comparative comfort; and soon came to an open water, where we launched our boats and kibitkas, and prepared for a voyage. All went on so far well; and my hopes seemed quite happy in the certainty of reaching the neighbouring isle. An hour carried us to a frozen channel; but the prows of our barques soon made it separate; and thus we proceeded, pioneering our passage for several miles, until we were again so surrounded and retarded by blocks of ice, that to make an inch more way was impossible. And to add to this present dilemma, it continued freezing with such rigour that the people said it would be madness to contend any longer with such terrific obstacles; we must return immediately to Warsala (what a

knell was that!) or resign ourselves to be frozen up in our present situation, to the certain loss of all our lives.

Debate was no longer possible: but the peasants were so aware of the danger, that without awaiting any orders from me, they prepared to return. And, after tenfold more difficulties and fatigue than we had before experienced, about four o'clock in the following morning, I again found myself in this wretched hovel; almost despairing, that for some unrepented sin I am doomed to *abide* a prisoner "*in these thrilling regions of thick ribbed ice!*"

During my comfortable tour on the gulf, I more than once thought of what a voyage this would be for one of the tender sex. It has been dared by some ladies on extraordinary occasions: but when I looked around, I only wondered how they survived the horror of the scene: how they outlived the risque of colds, and the thousand miseries to which their gentle forms, amid such inclemencies, must be subjected.

This period of the year is, of all others, the most unpropitious for crossing the gulf, the waters being neither open nor closed; but ever changing their state, to the great annoyance and danger of the traveller.

During the summer months, the journey must be highly romantic and interesting. The mode of travelling is then easy. Every side of the gulf presents objects teeming with natural beauties. The varied hue of the islands; some of a russet brown, whitened over with sea fowls; others, green and overhanging with cottages, perched like eagles' nests among the rocks; must fill the eye with pictures, deserving the pencil of a Loutherbourgh or Claude Lorraine.

Arvo, January, 1808.

You would perceive that newyear's day found me in that detestable island. How bitter was the comparison with the last! I was then at Mosco, in a paradise; I was now at Warsala, in a hyperborean hades, and likely to remain for six months to come!

Four or five days more passed; and I assure you I began to think of turning Robinson Crusoe at once, and, with my

faithful Friday, stooping myself out a decent dwelling in one of the rocks; when a favourable hour put our project to flight, by wafting a party of people from the very island to which I wanted to go. "The water that brings will take," said my sagacious attendant; so seizing the happy moment, I engaged the boat and boatmen: and the following morning, thank heaven, bade a final adieu to Warsala!

But all was not smooth way. From the first step to the last in our short voyage, we met accumulations of mishaps, dangers, and long cold wadings over the breaking and bending ice. Conceive, it was not the serpentine, nor any tolerably circumscribed piece of water that we were walking over, but a vast arm of the sea, a mighty gulf, ready to open at every step, and swallow us everlastingly! I am certain that we traversed a distance of eight English miles, sounding at every yard with our spikes, through water two or three feet deep, to find whether the ice would bear, or we were perhaps approaching a fissure to ingulf us all. I was wet through, and so frozen, that had it not been for the warm tobacco pipe I constantly kept in my mouth (this disagreeble custom is absolutely necessary here), I believe I should have expired with the piercing cold. No imagination can paint it; so full is it on this gulf of horrors. Some of the poor fellows were quite worn out, when we reached the boats, which were moored against a sort of islet of the extremity of the ice. A draught of brandy revived them, and the vessels were launched.

We embarked; and having a strong gale, and open water for three leagues, drew towards the wished-for shore. The violence of the wind, and the beating of the waters, had forced together quantities of floating ice, which, bending and sinking under every attempt we made to land, and other masses driving upon us by the fury of the waves, rendered all our movements dangerous. After much labour, and many complete duckings, we at last landed our persons and *effects;* yet not before our kibitkas were several times plunged overhead in the gulf, in trying to unboat them. In one of these divings I lost a part of my baggage, which contained drawings and articles of some value, now gone to adorn the mermaids.

Dark as it was, I jumped on shore with a gay presage of better fare than we had left; and very alertly followed our conductors some miles; while they, with as much ease as I walked, dragged our heavy kibithas over rocks, snow and ice, up hills, and I may say, down precipices.

In the evening, about five o'clock, we arrived at a village: and doubly happy was I to find that none of the noisome infections of Warsala had reached this spot. The village consisted of a few cottages; but our reception was primitively kind, and might have graced a city. The wives and daughters of the boatmen ran out towards us, and approaching myself and Schmidt with the same cordiality, invited us in, and spread their tables with a collection of eatables. To be sure their abodes were mere hovels; yet the hospitality and benevolence that reigned within, and the content which sat smiling on their honest countenances, gave a charm to every thing around. We forgot our mishaps; and partaking, not only of their simple fare, but of the amusements they presented to divert us, the whole place in a few minutes became a scene of the most innocent gaiety.

Our landlord, who was a fisherman (just such another good soul as the one that brought off our noble Sir Sidney from Havre!) had a very pretty wife; and producing a violin, a little dance soon commenced. The sound ran like the echoes of the bugle through the village; and our rustic hall was presently filled with all the inhabitants, young and old. Our host, fiddle in hand, by way of showing his best steps, led forth his better-half, and very respectably got through a sort of minuet. A general ball then ensued: and really I never saw a set of people more delighted. I treated them with all the delicacies of the island, consisting chiefly of their own native brandy; a beverage distilled by themselves from grain; and a few Petersburgh cakes.

I cannot compliment my pretty islanders so far as to say their dances equalled the graces of the Russians. The whole composed a kind of awkward reel, or a continued round about of eight or ten together, whose arms were twisted with each other, while they jumped along in a sort of waltzing step;

joining the notes of the fiddle with most discordant shouts. Were a stranger, on seeing the two nations of Sweden and Russia for the first time, called upon to judge from their dancing and vocal accompaniments, which was the more civilized, he would not hesitate to decide in favour of the Muscovites. The sweet wildness and pathetic melodies of the Russian songs, and the simple elegance with which the village girls go through their pastoral dances, bespeak a people far advanced in the refinements of taste. Their early acquaintance with the Greeks must account for these bodily graces: it required rather more study to cultivate the mental ones; and besides, they were not the fashion of the day. The Swedes yet retain all the barbarity in their leaping gesticulations which belonged to their Scandinavian ancestors; keeping time to the beating of their feet, with the most vociferous bawling: and the louder they shout, the more complete they deem the pleasures of the dance.

The men here are well looking, and the women extremely handsome. Indeed, independent of their fair and ruddy complexions, the ingenuousness of their countenances, gives the finishing touch of beauty. A face may be critically fine; and yet, unless it possesses the broad seal of candour, its beauties are blanks to me. A cold, reserved set of features, even when formed with the nicest symmetry, I never could endure. Give me the open forehead, gracious beaming eye, and mouth parting with the bright smile of frankness; and mere feature fanciers may *take all the rest the heavens go round!*

When I add to the personal charms of my fair entertainers, the unabated attentions both of them and their husbands, it forms so wide a contrast to the aspects and sordidness of the people at Warsala, that I can hardly believe so small a distance can produce such extremes. But in fact, this covey of islands is only an epitome of the European nations: neighbours, yet differing more or less in person, dress and character.

About eleven o'clock (a late hour for a rustic *fête*), I took my leave of the joyous group, and retired to my kibitka, where I meant to repose for the night. There I found my honest and faithful servant as usual, with his sabre in his hand, like a sentinel guarding my goods and chattels. His attachment ever

since he has been with me, merits my sincerest gratitude: for neither piercing frosts, nor impending dangers, could ever check him, when serving me. Like many in the world, he has seen better days, has met with its evils; and now seems only to exist for his master. His peculiarities, affection for me, and zeal for all in whom I am interested, often reminds me of Partridge in Tom Jones: and I am certain, did any novelist want to study from nature, the fidelity and amiable oddities both of Tom's domestic, and uncle Toby's faithful Trim, he would find their rival in my honest Schmidt.

Kumlinge, January, 1808.

At the dawn of morning our caravan of kibitkas prepared to set forth. I speak thus pompously, because several travellers with their domestics had arrived during the night: and now assembling on the shore, with the hospitable villagers in attendance, we looked more like an eastern caravan, than a few obscure individuals making the best of their way home.

We proceeded towards an island lying greatly to the left of the usual road; for to take the direct one, we found impossible; and advancing by slow degrees, experienced a repetition of all the disagreeables of the day before, with the addition of a fog so thick, that scarce an object could be discerned at ten yards' distance. This premature night retarded us much, and greatly increased our danger.

I am thus particular in describing my journey from island to island, that should peace and fate smile on my fortunes, and you ever be tempted by friendship to cross this gulf, you may either choose a better season, or be in some degree prepared against the evils of the bad.

At eight o'clock in the morning we left Arvo, and at two in the day arrived at the isle of Torshena; and even so early, being obliged to take up our quarters for the night. Here *Chaos* seems to have *disinherited Creation;* and *old Night* to have so out-shouldered the *youthful Day*, that we hardly ever, at this season of the year, catch a glimpse of his garments. The light of noon here, is no brighter than a dull evening on your side the water; and the darkness of night is of so pitchy

a blackness, that death itself seems to have shrouded this frozen world.

Having escaped the yawning chasms in the ice, we landed; and the object that struck my sight was a church. It was the first I had seen since I left Finland, and appeared of such large dimensions as to imply a numerous population in the island. Inquiry explained the matter otherwise. Like the Jewish tabernacle, the inhabitants of other isles came hither to worship, having neither church nor pastor in their own. It is built in the form of a Greek cross, wholly of wood, and painted red, with fanes on each end. The structure is simple and picturesque. Not many yards from it, on a rising ground, stands a high tower of a similar colour, wherein are the bells. This religious edifice is very romantically situated, being on the edge of a small lake, and boldly surrounded by vast masses of finely diversified rock. Not a tree or shrub is perceptible on even the most sheltered spots: therefore the beauty of these views consists wholly in the outline and broad sweeps of colouring; no advantages of vernal clothing, beyond moss or grass, ever met the eye.

We left Torshena next morning at half past seven. Having received civilities from the natives, similar to those of Arvo; and both sheep being of one pasture, that is to say, the clerical crook of the pastor of the little church on the lake, extending to our hospitable fisherman's fraternity, I have no doubt that he must, in real merit, be worthy of a bishopric: the virtues of his flock are undeniable witnesses of his own.

When we bade these good folks adieu, we had a route of many miles to go over the ice before we embarked; but having taken to our boats, in about eighteen hours we arrived at the island of Kumlinga; passing, as we sailed along, innumerable small islets, as well as huge barren rocks, which surrounded us on all sides like a stony labyrinth. The sameness of the view, the blackness of the ice, and the unvaried gloominess of the atmosphere, equally oppressed the eye and the spirits.

Kumlinga appears larger than any of its neighbours: and if a judgment may be formed of the number of inhabitants by the multitude of wind-mills, it must boast a considerable colony.

Here the gallant master of Sancta Panca would be quite at home; his airformed enemies presenting themselves on the shore in whole battalions. These erections are objects of ambition with the natives, and serve as excellent telegraphs, to apprise the poor polar wanderer, where he may find a few of the human race amongst so many desert rocks.

On my arrival at the posthouse, which I found tolerably comfortable, I purchased a couple of fine black game, extremely large and fat. The host told me that they abound in the island, consequently those who are lovers of this kind of sport, when detained here, will not find themselves quite barren of amusement.

Having eaten a measureless dinner; for after so many hours starvation, I was as hungry as the dragon of Wantley that swallowed *a cow and a calf, an ox and a half, a church and a steeple, and all the good people, and yet he complained and bellowed for more!* I made inquiries relative to the prospect of leaving this, our new haven, and learnt that on the western side of the island the waters were completely open; and if the wind allowed, we might proceed next day. Having already had too much of the perambulating style of travelling, this information was an excellent dessert to my black game; and delighted with the hope of reaching Echero to-morrow, the last of the isles we are to touch at before we aim at Grislehaman, I took my diary to scribble thus far to you.

We have agreed to pay the price ordered by government for each boat; namely, nine shillings and sixpence; for which sum I shall be conveyed a distance of nineteen English miles, which makes about three Swedish. In my arrangement, I found an old obstacle very much in my way, that proves the cogency of this piece of advice: always, when possible, use the carriages of the country in which you travel! Had I been provided with a Swedish *traineaux*, and unhampered of half my baggage (some of which, you see, was kind enough to dispossess me of itself,) I should have been forwarded with ten times the expedition and at one quarter the expense.

The sledges used here are so slight, that they pass with facility over very otherwise insecure ice; and slide over the cliffs almost as smoothly as on the level ground, while the heavy

Russian machines, not having been constructed for such strange voyaging, are dragged about with difficulty and destructive damage. Besides these real inconveniencies, the natives make others, by inventing a thousand objections to the possibility of proceeding with such lumbering affairs; and stir they will not, till the traveller's pocket is picked, to pay for additional horses and people to assist in the extraordinary labour.

We got on board our vessels early in the day, and put out to sea, (if so short a distance may so be called) and after hard buffeting for two hours with every symptom of a tremendous storm, our boatmen superseded my earnest wish to go forwards; and turning about, relanded us on the rock we had so lately quitted.

A most tempestuous day and night followed. The morning dawned with the wind in dreadful gales and completely adverse. In short, we had every prospect of becoming better acquainted with the island than we desired. I therefore prepared for the worst, and took possession of the best quarter of the inn; occupying the same room in which the marquis of Douglas, in his way to St. Petersburgh, had for many days endured this insular penance.

Having nothing better to do, a fellow traveller and myself, being provided with iron pointed staves to secure our footing on the frozen ground, sallied forth to explore the country, and make what acquaintance we could. Being apprised there was a church at a little distance, we made for the parsonage. Discovering it, we entered *sans ceremonie;* and found a very hospitable, lively man, intelligent in his conversation, and apparently far beyond the confined sphere in which he was fixed. He introduced us to his wife, who seemed to be a very goody notable in her household, and, O Juno! six children, and another forthcoming! We were conducted by the lady into a kitchen well stored with culinary wares; (you see the love of fame mingles with the small as well as great!) and also to outhouses filled with hogs, goats, sheep and cows. In short, she made it evident that our clerical friend had no reason to join in the complaint of his sacerdotal brethren in Wales; many of whom boast no other live stock than that of their own producing; and per-

haps, the scanty additions of a lank cat and ravenous dog, completes the quadruped dignity of their establishment!

If I may judge of all the Swedish pastors from the present specimen, they live in clover. All was smiling around our host, who set before us cold hams and fowls sufficient to satisfy two famishing wolves, had they stopped at his door. He spoke a little German; by which good fortune we obtained more information in ten minutes, than we could gather in as many hours from the pantomimic converse to which we had lately been reduced.

He accompanied us to his church: during our walk we learnt that three hundred and twenty souls were the population of the island, forming his congregation, with the addition of the people belonging to several small adjoining isles, who come to divine service at Kumlinga, whenever the weather will permit. About forty families altogether, he said, composed his flock: from the head of each he annually received six rix dollars. His parochial fees were as follow:

For a christening two schillings; (twopence English.)

For a marriage twelve schillings.

For a funeral twenty-four schillings.

This latter donation is the largest, I suppose, as being a farewel sum; the object of it being freed from rendering any future pecuniary tributes to the pastor, having once for ever paid the debt he owed to life and to nature. This subject led us to know the annual exits and entrance of these islanders in and out of the world. Last year, the number of births was nineteen, and of deaths fifteen. I observed several very old persons speak to the minister in our walk; and I understand that many live to still more advanced periods.

The church is built of granite, and roofed with wood, having a belfry tower attached to it not unlike the minarets of Mosco. It is painted a dingy red; apparently the favourite colour of the country. The interior of the building is curiously adorned in a most Gothic taste, but by no means badly executed. It is painted in compartments, with pictures representing the life of Christ; with this small difference from what it ought to be, that the designs would better fit a legend of heathen gods, than a

representation of the gospel. The roof has not escaped the labour of this indefatigable artist: angels, saints, and odd animals like nothing on the earth or in the seas, are swarming about the ceiling; and seem like a flight of locusts looking down on whom they may devour. A gigantic crucifix, and several other wooden images, are placed against the walls; relics of the Roman faith and superstitious fanaticism.

The structure is of rude Gothic; and has certainly stood four centuries at least. The burial ground is very confined, (which I have ever thought an impious churlishness in most countries); and accordingly is disgracefully crowded. Either give our departed brethren room enough to sleep in, above or below; if not surface sufficient, then let pits be dug so deep that they may lie like the strata of their mother earth; and not, when a new grave is required, empty an old one of its contents, and leave the ashes of the once sacred dead to be blown about at the pleasure of every wind.

The church yard of Kumlinga was a case in point; it was one continued platform of graves, without room almost for a blade of grass to grow between. Each *narrow house*, as our dear Ossian nominates the last bed of mortality, was surmounted with a wooden remembrancer of the departed, in the shape of a cross, headed pointedly like a spear. On this was carved a short inscription and the usual dates.

Leaving the church, in our walk amongst the rocks, we saw quantities of juniper and cranberries: with the juice of the first the people of these islands flavour the spirits they distil. Indeed, too much cannot be said of the industry of the Kumlingians. What little soil their rocks afford is rich, and they improve it to the utmost advantage. Our minister showed us spots between the cliffs which, he told us, by good cultivation, would yield twelvefold. His account of this little hive of human bees was truly gratifying: yet, with all their labour, and the fruitfulness of particular places under their hands, the produce of the island is not a maintenance for the inhabitants, who, at certain hard seasons, are obliged to apply to Finland to supply the deficiency.

The following day, being Sunday, we paid our friendly pas-

tor* a second visit, and attended him to church. The men sit on the right side, and the women on the left. A distinction between the married and single of the fair sex, is distinctly marked. The married or widowed wear black silk caps, fashioned in the old Dutch taste pictured by their artists of a hundred and fifty years ago: the maiden females are more becomingly coiffured, having headdresses of brocade in various colours, neatly trimmed with white lace. Their garments are shaped like those of the women in Warsala. I describe the fair, though I was not inattentive to the sermon; and my companion and myself returned to our inn, much pleased with our rustic preacher's eloquence, of look and action! For, it must be remembered, we could not understand a word he now said. He was preaching Swedish to his congregation, not talking German with us.

Aland (or, as your newspapers have it, Oland), January, 1808.

A few monotonous melancholy days passed (during which I twice attempted to leave Kumlinga, and was driven back by stress of weather); but at last, though a terrible fall of snow was our *avant courier*, a favourable wind promised to carry us to Wargata. We embarked; and after an excellent passage, arrived at the island in about three hours.

Having paid the boatmen four rix dollars, I procured horses to convey me across the land to the opposite part. As we proceeded, the beauty of the country, the rich woods, and luxuriant copses, made so striking a contrast to the naked spot I had just quitted, that I could hardly believe myself awake. A few hours ago, I was in a stony desert; now, I found myself travelling through groves of pines, firs, and every other tree which fills the forest of the north! Cheering as the drive was, even when the leafless branches were covered with snow, I could not help clothing them in idea with the verdure of spring, and fancying the exquisite charms of the scene, when

* This worthy clergyman was the man who afterwards defended the Swedish isles so gallantly against the Russians. The brave stand he made in Aland must be in every one's recollection.—R. K. P. 1808.

momentary views of the gulf breaking through the valleys, would impart variety and romantic interest to every turn.

Arriving at the destined port or ferry, we prepared to cross to the next island, called Skorpas. The distance being short, one boat only was in waiting. I therefore went over first with my kibitka, leaving Schmidt to follow with the other. In due time I was landed on a point covered with thickets and grotesque masses of rock. The late storms had made little ceremony in laying the branching honours of the wood in the dust, or rather in the snow; for numbers of trees were stretched on the ground, hurled one upon another, and side by side, so interwoven by icicles adhering to and uniting their mingling arms, that to proceed seemed almost impracticable, to separate them would be impossible. However, extremity engenders enterprise, and enterprise success! Over we went; but how, I cannot tell you: and soon after our achievement, I observed my honest squire, with the other kibitka in his train, surmounting the supine forest with as much determination as his master.

Two hours elapsed before we could procure horses: but that being effected, we proceeded as usual, drawn alternately by them, men, women, and boys, over plains of ice and hills of hardened snow. By these means sufficient progress was made, thank heaven! to bring us to the island of Aland; but not until the brittle causeway had three times given way with my kibitkas, plunged overhead in the petrifying brine, drenched to my skin, and pierced through with cold, wet, and a forked sleet beating in my face, I really felt myself completely miserable; and would have given worlds to have been in my sledge on the distant roads of Torneo; happy, amidst those frozen regions even beyond the arctic circle, to escape the life-consuming damps and ever varying wretchedness of these horrible isles.

Aland is the largest and the finest in the gulf. Like Skorpas, it is enriched with wood, and exceeds all the others in marks of thorough cultivation. A few posts and a little more ice tramping brought us to the little port in Echero, where we were to await a fair wind for Grisslehamn.

The inn, house, hotel, with whatever title you choose to hondur it, had as much pretensions to the one name as to the other, all were equally unbefitting; and when I drew towards it, I fancied that my servant had made a mistake, and was ushering me into a cow shed. All the other execrable habitations I had visited, even the den of Warsala itself, were palaces to this. Filth greeted my eyes and nose at the first step: the salute was too potent to be borne, and turning about, I told my followers that if I herded with the wolves, I would not enter so murderous a hole. However *necessitas non habet leges;* I could not get a boat to convey me onward till the next morning; and so I was obliged to cover my plumes, and pass the *thirtieth day* of my watery pilgrimage under this anathematised roof.

It is exactly one month since I left St. Petersburgh! So long have I been threading in and out of passages which, in summer, would have taken me across in the course of twenty-four hours. You have often praised my patience! Now, I hope (notwithstanding a few hard wrung complaints have been wrested out of me), you will call me a sort of male Grisel; for I have endured without flinching, ten thousand times as many buffets from the elements, as she suffered at the hands of her boisterous lord. And yet, with all this boasting, I know of no temptation that could persuade me to take another winter trip across this abominable water, but news of a peace between the two countries I love, and a speedy recal to St. Petersburgh. Leander swam the Hellespont: I would do more; I would recross the gulf! But in serious sadness, my dear friend, this is no trifling encounter; for many have perished in the attempt, some have died in the passage from cold and fatigue; and others, expired immediately on gaining the main land, from an exhaustion that never could be redeemed.

On the morning of the thirteenth, I hired a very large boat to convey myself and vehicles direct to Grislehamn. The charge was nine dollars, with additions, should the changing wind, or any other obstacle prevent our reaching the opposite coast that day, and oblige us to land on an island (which Heaven forbid!) that lay in the track. In such a case I am to

pay the boatmen sixteen schillings a day for their subsistence while with me. Such expensive consequences of delay, as well as other attendant disagreeables, you may be sure I am anxious to avoid. And now being summoned to my boat, I am off.

Grislehamn, January.

We sailed with a side wind. But the demon of frustration again put his hand between me and the wished for haven; and at three o'clock we brought up at the infernal island I had hoped to pass. Here destiny fixed us for at least the night. Singleshare it is called. A naked rock: not a blade of grass could it ever boast: and all the habitations it contains are two miserable hovels for the reception of unfortunates like myself, obliged to seek shelter amidst desolation and horrors. A telegraph is here to communicate with the main land and the island we had left. This spot being as bare of fertility as its few inhabitants are of honesty; bleak as may be their situation, their hospitality is bleaker; the only eatables we could procure, and at an exorbitant price, were potatoes and milk. Their means of existence are drawn from Aland; and their ingenuity is of course exerted to make them last as long as possible. Young seals are the very treasury of these people; for at certain seasons they catch them, prepare them into food, eating part fresh, and curing the rest into hams, &c. The entrails they dry for their cows' winter nourishment.

Our old extortioning host told us that the cattle he possesses (three in number, resembling those on the Scottish isles), swim during the summer from island to island, to seek their scanty meal of grass amongst the fissures of the rocks. Even in the most blowing weather these creatures defy the violence of the waves, and cross more than four English miles of sea, alternately swimming, and resting themselves on their sides when fatigued. Having gleaned the neighbouring cliffs, they take the flood again and return to their home. I forgot to ask my informer, whether the damsels of his household did not sometimes, in the European fashion, take a trip to the other isles on the backs of these adventurous animals. It would be no very

uninteresting sight, to see one or two of the pretty Swedish girls, with their fair hair floating in the wind, speeding their way through the summer waves to their expecting lovers on a distant shore. Could I have found cow or calf inclined to brave the element in winter, I belive I would have tried my luck, and galloped, *à la Neptune*, through the waters, to the fair haven of Grislehamn.

My purgatory in this solitary *Share*, (for you must remark that *share* is Swedish for rock), continued two days. However, on the fifteenth of this month, a fine morning appeared, with a favourable wind; and embarking with as much eagerness as poor Achilles would have done, if, by jumping into Charon's ferry, he might have been translated to the upper world again, I pushed away from Singleshare, most devoutly hoping that *single* should ever be my *share* of visiting that execrable rock.

At eight o'clock in the morning we were under sail; and in three hours drew close to the shore of the continent. But here my evil genius, like a shrewish wife, determining to have the last word, would not let me escape even now without another proof of her spleen. We were driven on a lee shore full of drifting ice, and there stuck, or struggled for extrication, till eight in the evening; when, though wet and fatigued, yet at last, thank God, we disembarked on the firm land at Grislehamn.

The inn that bade us welcome smelt so much of Warsala, that, having ordered my poor fellow to take a little rest while I completed my aquatic annals to you, I have determined to proceed immediately. Horses are ready; and at midnight I shall be on my way to Stockholm. May letters await me there, that will inform me of all in England, dear to your faithful friend!

LETTER XXXIV.

Stockholm, January, 1808.

OWING to the late heavy falls of snow I was detained a little until the roads could be sufficiently cleared to allow me to pass. This useful operation is performed by the peasantry in a manner so ingenious as to deserve noting. A large and open triangle formed of very strong and heavy planks, is placed upon the snow on the high road. To this machine horses are attached, which drag it forward; the acute angle plowing up the snow as they advance, and throwing the wintry impediment to the right and left, the road is cleared, and travellers can proceed with ease and rapidity.

The management of this convenience is excellently regulated; it being impossible for the peasantry ever to neglect their duty any part of the year; for, throughout the whole term, the good state of the roads is particularly guarded. Every parish or district, by a strict ordinance, and under a severe penalty, is obliged to send a certain number of people every day into the roads, to keep them open in winter, and repair them in summer. Whatever may be the forfeiture annexed to disobedience of these orders, I do not hear that it has ever been levied: all seem so interested in preserving this branch of the police, both the heads of the districts who command, and the peasants who obey, that I am told, complaints are never heard, and that the roads themselves are not to be equalled even in England.

Towards the evening of the following day I arrived at Osby, being four Swedish miles (about twenty-four English), from the capital. I would have proceeded that night, but the intense cold, and the civility of the people at the inn, were inducements for halting I could not resist; and ordering a comfortable bed to be got ready, I prepared to await the morning there, when I would start for Stockholm at an early hour.

I found the rooms of my honest host and hostess not so warm as their wishes. I was put into a miserably bleak apart-

ment, where, though a fire did greet my eyes, I was sure none had entered the stove for many days before; and after shivering by it for full three hours I was not a bit the better, but sat quaking and teeth-chattering like a man in an ague fit. I looked at Reaumur's thermometer, and found that twenty-five degrees of cold were without, and that five were within; (I mean in the room I inhabited). You will not be surprised that I should now acknowledge, from personal conviction, the truth of the governor Inkutskoi's declaration, "that in the winter season, even in his own house, and surrounded by his stoves, he was obliged to sit with all his furs on; being never able to get less than ten degress of frost in his chamber."

When the hour of rest came, I found my situation not so bad; and not daring to take my usual repose in my kibitka, got into a snug bed most comfortably wrapped up. Thus was I disposed of: but in spite of the severe weather, and unknown to me, (for they who would take all affection is ready to sacrifice, are more selfish than worthy), my trusty domestic took possession of his sledge, still to be on the watch. The consequence was, that thirty degrees took place at midnight; and when the morning broke my poor fellow was found in such a state, that a very few minutes more would have rendered his recovery impossible. After he did revive, I was not a little fearful of what might yet be the effects of so thorough a freezing, and therefore stirred not till the middle of the day, when all indisposition seemed to vanish, and he resumed his duties with his usual cheerfulness and activity.

We bade farewel to our civil landlord; and beginning our march, in about five hours reached the metropolis of Sweden. The ground, on the approach to Stockholm, is pretty enough, being rather hilly and well wooded. I also observed several handsomely built country residences peeping from amidst the trees, in the manner of our own little villas in the vicinity of London.

The town is not discoverable as you approach it on the Osby side; and when I came so near as to enter the gate, I was stopped by the customhouse officers, who examined my baggage in the most insolent manner; and after receiving double

the *douceur* I usually gave on these occasions, behaved with increased impertinence and imposition. They are not absolutely officers of the crown; and that their shameless extortion sufficiently declared. This part of the royal revenue is farmed out; having been invested in the hands of several of the merchants in Stockholm, as a security for a loan his majesty wanted a few years ago. The term, I believe, expires in three years; at which period it will return to the king, and most probably be put on a footing more honourable and beneficial to the state. At present, this controlling situation of the custom-farmers is severely complained against by the rest of the merchants, who find themselves traversed in a thousand ways by these tyrants in office, to the injury of some, the ruin of others, and the grievance of all.

The contrast between this city and St. Petersburgh struck me forcibly; and certainly, much to the advantage of the latter. The streets of Stockholm are inconveniently as well as inelegantly narrow. The exterior of the houses is dirty, the architecture shabby, and all strikes as very low and confined. Yet I must except the palace; and that is commanding, in a grand and simple taste. It is square, on an elevated ground, has a spacious court in the centre, and is in every way worthy a royal residence. Near the entrance are two large bronze lions; who was the artist I cannot learn, but they are admirably executed. As we view the palace from the water, it reminds us of Somerset-House, though it far exceeds the British structure in size, magnificence, and sound architecture.

Stockholm cannot boast any considerable place or square, nor indeed any street wider than an English lane. However, as every thing in this world suffers or gains by comparison, perhaps when I have passed a few weeks here, and the vividness of Russian topography is a little faded, I may fancy the streets wider, and the open places more capacious. Coming from the finest city in Europe, perhaps, may affect the senses like one suddenly brought from excessive light into the shade: my eye is not yet capable of embracing at a moment, what use will afterwards make me see and estimate.

The situation of this capital deserves finer edifices. Like St.

Petersburgh, it is built on islands; seven, of different extent, form its basis. They lie between the Baltic and the Malar lake. The harbour is sufficiently deep, even up to the quay, to receive the largest vessels. The city is supposed to have been founded in the year 1252 by Birger Jarl, regent of the kingdom; but the court was not removed hither from Upsal before the last century. At the extremity of the harbour the streets rise one above the other in the form of an amphitheatre, with the magnificent palace, *like a rich jewel in an Ethiop's ear*, in the centre. Except in the suburbs, where a few houses are of wood, the buildings are generally of stone, or of brick stuccoed, which at a little distance has a similar effect! The several islands on which the city is erected, are united by twelve bridges. The royal academy of sciences (of which I shall speak further hereafter), owes its institution to Linnæus, and was incorporated in the year 1748. There is also a royal academy of arts, which, when I have visited, I will more particularly note; and likewise the arsenal, said to be a most interesting place. There is a national bank in Stockholm, and several manufactories which rather flag on account of the war.

By the above sketch, you will not be surprised to hear that the inns are intolerable; but to compensate for that inconvenience, the lodgings are good, and two establishments (most respectably superseding the use of taverns), are substituted for the *restaurateur* part of the animal economy. They are founded by gentlemen on a liberal footing, are called *La Societé*, and the Burgher's Club. The first is for noblesse, officers of the garrison, and strangers: the other for merchants and strangers also. The former is at the court end of the town, and consists of three hundred members, most of them nobility, officers of rank, and foreign ministers and their suites. Well may it bear the title of *La Societé*, for it is, without exception, the most rational and elegant assembly with which I ever associated. Perfect freedom is allowed; but such is the decorum with which every person conducts himself, that the nauseous bacchanalian practices, which too often disgust in our British social meetings, never obtrude themselves here. They have an excellent billiard-table, and a library of well chosen books, with most of the

newspapers of the country; those of other nations of the continent are of course, under the present circumstances, interdicted: and so far well; but they exclude the papers of England also. This is very strange; and the more strange, united as the two countries are in policy, that it should be an act, not of individuals alone, but of the government. Whatever newspapers may be inclosed from British merchants to their correspondents here, are never received. In a country like Sweden, where liberty is so tenaciously boasted, and where an Englishman would naturally expect to find the gazettes of his country, as an ally and a free state, such precaution is rather extraordinary. The reason of it I cannot guess, as I never saw a nation less infected by envious jealousy, but rather, in all things, honest, brave, and honourable.

In the institution of *La Societé* an excellent dinner is given, but not at so excellent an hour, viz. at two o'clock! However, the price is moderate, and the attendance good. No stranger can be admitted that is not introduced by a member, or by the minister from his own court. By these means, all improper persons are excluded. This club, as well as that of the *bourgeoises*, is on a far more liberal plan than the English clubs of St. Petersburgh and Mosco. However, orders of men have a certain resemblance in all countries; and if I preferred a good dinner as my *primum mobile*, I should certainly pay the most frequent visits to the merchant's society. If nobility spread the board excellently, trade doth it superexcellently; and Lucullus himself need not turn for better fare from most city tables. Indeed, during all my travels abroad (and they have pretty well measured the continent), I have ever found, both publicly and privately, that the gentlemen of the golden fleece best understood the use of the carcase.

Having nothing particular to engage my time on the first evening of my arrival, I went to the theatre. Like all others on the continent, it was dismally dark, and as dismally stupid. Neither actor nor actress played well enough to bring a message to some of our sorriest kings and queens of the buskin; and had you been joint spectator with me at this tragedy, I believe I should have had a most hearty laugh at what now sent me

home yawning and half asleep. The ridiculous can never be fully enjoyed alone.

On returning to my hotel, I inquired whether there were any better actors than those I had just seen. No; was the answer; the loss of Gustavus III. threw a gloom on the gaieties of Sweden, as well as its fine arts, which had never dispersed. Formerly a French company filled with splendor and talent the building dedicated to Thespis, by the late king, in *la Place de Gustave Adolphe:* but the fatal event of that monarch's death closed its doors, and plunged the whole country in grief.

It has been no Ephesian sorrow: even the succession and virtues of the present beloved Gustavus, cannot obliterate from the minds of the people the feelings which followed the murder of his father, their revered sovereign and sire. It is really delightful to hear the Swedes talk of their kings; not as subjects merely, but as sons and brothers. As sons, they lament the munificent Gustavus III.; and as brothers glory in the magnanimity of his successor. Deep as the blow struck to the people, it fell as heavily on the young prince; for ever since the death of his royal father, Gustavus has held his image

> "Within the book and volume of his brain,
> Unmixed with baser matter."

He attempts not to wrest from the Swedes the long regrets they pay to his memory; but rather neglecting the encouragement of those gay scenes amidst which his father fell, he dedicates his attentions entirely to the political safety of his kingdom.

Hence the miserable theatre I visited, is the only one; and nothing is performed there, but pieces in the national language, some original, and others translations from the Spanish or French; all equally ill played and wretchedly appointed with scenery. Having made my entrance once amongst them, I can assure you, in true stage language, it was *for that night only;* and my *debut* being made, my *exit* followed as a final take leave of the Swedish drama. Acting, when in perfection, is certainly the most interesting of all amusements: it fills the eye, heart, and mind. But when it is bad, indifferent, or merely pretty

well, there is nothing to me more stale and flat, more caricaturing and libelling of the passions of men; and, therefore, an ill acted play is the dullest of all dull things. And—*another and*—You see how catching these bathos-ical moods are, how Alexandrinally they drawl out the sentences! And for fear the subject should still more infect my pen, I will in decent time end my epilogue, with the old assurance to my audience, of how much I deprecate their censure, and am in all humility their (that is your) very sincere, &c.

LETTER XXXVII.

Stockholm, January, 1808.

AS I am sitting in my window, I cannot do better than give you a sketch of the moving picture in the street. The hackney sledges here differ little from those of St. Petersburgh; and the natives, like the Russians, keep their bodies warm with sheep skins; only so far changing the fashion, as to wear the skin inward, with an outward covering of cloth in the form of a coat.

With respect to the private carriages (and that they have every claim to respect which mere age demands, is very evident), I cannot praise their beauty, most of them having numbered fifty years; some, passed their grand climacteric; and a few, so paralyzed by time as to threaten dissolution at every step. The liveries of the servants are in the same hoary condition, and from many a gaping mouth remind you

> "How the canker-worm gnaweth the chariots of the great,
> And the moth fretteth the garments of the mighty!"

So saith one of their own sages, and so is it exemplified now: indeed, I never saw such *memento mori* in my life. How they will look on wheels, I will not presume to guess, but at present they are affixed to skates (here called *pattens;*) with a variety of encumbering appendages, besides two heavy footmen behind in large hats and high feathers.

The poverty of this little kingdom is its apology for these gothicisms; and most forcibly do they strike strangers coming from Russia or England. But though poor, it is not mean. The poverty of the Swedes resembles that of Fabricius: they are not ashamed of it. Possessing a national power in their virtue which commands more than wealth; that nobleness maintains their consequence amid all the splendors of the two great empires between which they lie. Without pretension to pomp of any kind, they possess general respect: and, while living in simple habitations, on a fare as simple; and enjoying society without any of our accompanying luxuries; no home-concerts, balls, or assemblies of any kind, they are contented and cheerful: they are more; they can despise what buys richer nations, and be even anchorites in self privation to put arms into the hands of their king to ward off the enslaver of Europe. They repeat the names of the great Gustavuses as catholics do those of their saints; and it was but yesterday that one of them said to me:

"Sweden was always strong enough when she fought for her liberty. In the fourteenth century, she alone routed the forces of three powerful kings armed against her freedom; and what, in the same cause, is to intimidate her now?"

When the fury of ambition pours along, is it not glorious to see the enthusiasm of virtue ready to oppose it? Nought but enthusiasm, much as people in general ridicule the possessors of it, will do in these times. Our enemy is a giant in power and resource. He has the hands of Briareus, and as many wiles as if he had the same number of heads. Any thing short of a principle against him, would be worn out by his overwhelming success; any thing short of enthusiam, would be extinguished. The Swedes seem to have both; and I trust they will stand their ground.

But I must not forget the city in the people, though it is the best compliment I could pay any nation. I never was in any great town that the *cicerone* of the place did not invite me to some spot, noted for its situation, to show the beauties of the scene. Therefore, to the top of the church of St. Catherine was I taken: and certainly a more advantageous point could not

have been selected. It stands on a mountainous rock in the heart of the city. I looked around me, and found the *coup d'œil* novel, grand and extensive. The surrounding waters and the numerous well-built islands comprising the metropolis; the distant wooded country, filled with mansions of the nobility and others; composed a view that I seldom had seen exceeded. The royal palace formed a magnificent feature, as well as did the shipping and various bridges connecting the different islands.

Fine as the prospect was at this season, it may easily be believed how the unfolding breath of summer will increase its charms. There is just as much difference between Stockholm now and then, as you see in comparing a tree without leaves, with one in full luxuriance. The city is situated on seven islands at the mouth of the Lake Maler, and divides it from the Baltic; on the shores of which have stood so many capitals of Sweden. The present metropolis was established in the thirteenth century, after the ancient town of Sigtuna was destroyed by a fleet from those coasts which now form part of the Russian empire. Stockholm has itself suffered by naval attacks, principally from Denmark: but seems now to consider danger from that quarter so remote, that no military defence is deemed necessary. Indeed the mouth of the lake near its junction with the Baltic, is so strongly fortified, that the present security appears sufficiently reasonable.

There are but two pieces of water in the kingdom, of greater magnitude than the Maler; and they are in the interior. It ranks as third in size; the Weter and Wener exceeding it in dimensions, though not in use, as this lake supplies Stockholm with every merchandise from the distant parts of the kingdom; and particularly brings into the royal treasury the golden produce of the mines.

The king rarely makes the capital his residence for any longer time than engages him to arrange the affairs of state; but to them he is scrupulously attentive. Helsingborg has lately been his head quarters, lying on the coast of the Sound, and containing works which his majesty is fond of inspecting, he regards it as a place of sufficient consequence to obtain from

him frequent visits. It had formerly a strong castle, which was almost demolished in the wars of the last century; but the present royal attachment to the place, seems to promise it a renewal of past grandeur. Excepting when particular inducements carry him elsewhere, the usual winter residence of Gustavus is at Gripsholm; a town in the province of Sudermanland (about twenty-five English miles west of Stockholm), where he has a palace, erected by the ancient kings of Sweden.

However, a circumstance has occurred which recals his majesty to the capital. It is the anniversary of the birthday of the late king; and the inhabitants of this city are arranging an entertainment with which they mean to celebrate the same, and to declare their loyalty to his beloved successor. This day, which gave birth to the monarch so canonized in all their hearts, is to open to the eyes of his son, and the nation, the statue of the illustrious Gustavus *Augustus!* For, with that title, so descriptive of his virtues and patronage of the fine arts, do some of them designate Gustavus III.

The king arrived late last night. The town was illuminated, and every preparation made for the solemnity of this day.

At the hour appointed for the disclosure of the long expected work of the well known Sergel, the troops, forming the garrison of Stockholm, were out, both horse and foot, upon the hill which faces the angle of the palace where the obelisk of granite stands. The concourse of people was immense, and the day, fortunately, fine. I, of course, was there; congratulating myself that a similar scene to one I had heard described at St. Petersburgh, of the opening of the statue of a great monarch, I should be a witness to at Stockholm.

The figure was covered with a temporary scaffolding, which, on a signal being given by the flight of a rocket, that his majesty was in sight, fell to the ground, and the form of their late king was beheld by the populace. Oh, what a shout was there! It was not the hurrah of surprised curiosity, but the cry of a people again beholding a father who had been rifled from them by the cruellest treachery. It pierced *my* heart; what must it then have done those who knew and had felt his virtues!

On the edge of the water, behind the statue, were ranged

the standards of each Swedish province, flanked by rostral columns of granite. On the appearance of the young king, a salute of a hundred pieces of cannon announced his arrival. Placing himself at the head of the three regiments of guards, and advancing before the figure, he gave the word of command, and they fired several volleys in honour of the day. His majesty rode a white charger; and was surrounded by his officers of state, as well as a body of cuirassiers, whose high helms, plumes, and shining armour, imparted an uncommonly chivalric effect to the scene. The action of the monarch seemed as if he yet thought himself prince only, and moving under the eye of his august father.

The feelings of one whose soul is so alive to honour and filial affection, cannot be doubted. He came to the unfolding of a monument erected to the memory of his father, by his people! It was not a cold ceremony, but a solemn dedication, to testify to posterity the everlasting reverence in which they held their murdered king; *their* father: and that he deserved that reverential title, every lip was open to declare. He watched over them with all the care of a parent; and provided for the poorest of his subjects with an attention, that showed affection was united with the justice of an impartial legislator.

So regarding his memory, did the people appear before his statue: and the melancholy aspect of his gallant successor, bore the strongest marks that his feelings were in unison. The look with which he contemplated the marble representative of his murdered father, I shall never forget. His face was as pale as the statue's, while an expression of sorrow and admiration sat in his eye, that commanded the homage it expressed. When he bent down his head, and turned from the scene, the acclamations of loyalty that resounded on every side seemed to burst from every heart. For a moment they forgot the father in the son, Gustavus Augustus, in Gustavus the Brave; and had the dropping of a tear sealed my death warrant at that time, it must have fallen; I never was so strangely affected: it was the virtue of the past and the present striking me at once; and, you will allow, that such admiration gives an agitating delight, that sometimes overflows at the eyes.

when he looks at you and speaks, the vivacity of his manner and the brilliancy of his countenance are beyond description. His mouth is well shaped, with small mustachios on his upper lip; and his hair, which is cropped and without powder, is combed up from his forehead.

Her majesty is most interestingly beautiful; very much resembling her sister the empress of Russia. She is fair with expressive blue eyes. Her features are fine; but the affability of her countenance, her smile, and engaging air, independently of other charms, would be sufficient to fascinate every heart almost to forget she was a queen, in her loveliness as a woman. She was drest with exquisite taste. Her hair, in light but luxuriant tresses over her brow and head, was looped up with a double diadem of jewels. Her robe was splendidly embroidered; and on her breast she wore the badges of the order of St. Catherine. And certainly it must be acknowledged that the star, whether of distinction or of beauty, never shone brighter than on the bosom of the fair *Helen of the North;* for thus this beautiful queen is generally distinguished: though, were I to give her a title, it should rather be that of Andromache, whose beauties, lovely as they were, were yet transcended by the more endearing graces of the chaste wife and tender mother.

During the whole of the evening, after the musical salutation, their majesties mingled with the company, conversing with every person with the kindest condescension. Every citizen was spoken to; and their eyes sparkled with joy, while their tongues faultered out a reply to the address of their sovereign. His conversation with the subjects of his *brother in arms*, our revered monarch, was of the most gratifying complexion; no coldness, no form; all was frank, great, and consistent with himself. In short, it would have been impossible for any potentate to have shown more graceful knight like courtesy to all present; or for a sovereign to be received with deeper homage from a brave and loyal people. In many courts I have seen the body of loyalty, here its spirit was felt.

Who that was present at such a scene would believe, that some of his ungracious subjects affect to lament the destiny

of the state? But so it is. As in most countries parties exist, who contend for they know not what, even in Sweden there are a set of grumblers, troubling the government with discontents, which, lying in themselves rather than in the constitution, neither king nor senate can rectify. These turbulent natures are the torment of every state. We may consider them as inherent diseases amongst all people; a sort of acrimonious humour boiling from the body politic, which, as the evil is in human nature, must discharge itself somewhere; and what is more, there is no hope of the disorder being cured, till the final exit of the world with all its imperfections.

A superb supper was prepared for the royal visitants, and one equally elegant for the rest of the assembly. Their majesties returned from the banqueting room into the dancing saloon about twelve o'clock, where they remained till four o'clock in the morning; at which time they took their leaves; first kissing their offspring with the most parental tenderness, and then repeating their adieus to the company, arm in arm they left the apartment, followed by the acclamations and blessings of all present.

So powerful was the example of this illustrious pair (and indeed, at the moment they embraced their children first recalled to me the similitude of Hector and Andromache), that every wife drew nearer to her husband, and, like her august queen, quitted the room so supported, rather than be led out by any of the young men who pressed around her. The effect was as remarkable as instantaneous; and showed the consequence of example in the great. As I observed the departing groups, I could not but reflect with pleasure on the scene I had witnessed: where a young and heroic sovereign had laid aside his purple, and appeared amongst his people, as a friend, a husband, and a father. This was a lesson for the world as well as for Sweden; for princes as well as their subjects.

I understand that this *fête*, and the elevation of the statue besides, was given at the charge of the citizens of Stockholm. They were, in all ages of the monarchy, more attached to their sovereign than any other inhabitants of the towns; and now, they evinced the same sentiment by a cost and magnificence rarely exhibited in the kingdom.

I have always found that amongst a fair race of people beauty predominates: and in no country did I ever see more general claims than both the males and females of Sweden have to that charming gift of nature. The figures of the men are well proportioned, often very elegantly; with good features and animated complexions. The women are delicately shaped, with skins so softly tinted, that it looks more like the soft texture of the maiden rose, than flesh and blood. There is something very feminine in this sort of beauty, and when in perfection it is absolutely seraphic. You can recollect Homer's description of the golden haired Helen, and you will understand what I mean.

A more lovely assemblage of these demi-goddesses could not have been produced, than those I saw last night in the ball room; however, they wanted that air which we call fashion, that ease of deportment, that, I cannot tell what, of *ton*, which the French, Russian, and English fair of the same rank, so eminently possess.

In one accomplishment both sexes are agile to an excess: dancing. There are few Swedes of any quality, that do not perform this exercise with a science beyond any thing we could either expect or desire in a mere amateur. I am much of Chesterfield's opinion, that "whatever it is worth while to do, it is worth while to do well." And certainly, though it be worth while for a gentleman or lady to dance elegantly, it is mere fantastic idleness to become such proficients, as to rival the professional exertions of a Vestris or Deshayes. I do not insinuate a sly whip at any of my acquaintance by this remark: some persons are so happily formed by nature, inheriting grace at their birth, that "nothing they mean well, they can do ill." I only dislike where men and women make a *study* of dancing, and raise into first considerations the mere playthings of life.

Having led you such a whirligig, you will think it high time I should profit by my own remark; and ceasing my curvets, bid you adieu for the night. Then, taking the civil hint, I very gladly subscribe myself your ever faithful friend.

LETTER XXXVIII.

Stockholm, February, 1808.

HAVING presented you at court, I shall now conduct you to parade; and show the monarch of Sweden in the midst of his soldiers. On great occasions he is always attended by his drabant, or body guard, which is composed wholly of nobility. Their dress is particularly martial; and, I understand, is in the same fashion they wore in the reign of Charles the Twelfth.

The number of the drabants is now confined to forty; but under Charles they were more numerous, being ever an almost impregnable belt of brave hearts around him. At the terrible battle of Pultowa, when the litter in which the wounded king lay was shattered to pieces by a volley from the Russian cannon, twenty-four of these young nobles were killed by the explosion, and the rest, all excepting seven, slain in the contention over their fallen sovereign. In honour of this valiant remnant, who carried off the almost expiring Charles, the corps, hereafter, wore seven buttons on a particular part of their dress, in commemoration of the circumstance.

Every individual of the drabant being noble, even to the privates, they all have military rank. On days of state they stand round the person of the king as our yeomen of the guards attend on king George. Their cuirasses are of polished steel, and have three golden crowns, the arms of Sweden, embossed upon them. Their sleeves, breeches, &c. are of buff cloth; their boots are high, with long spurs. A superb casque of gilded brass, splendidly plumed, and crested with a lion, is worn on the head. Their weapons are a carbine and sword. The effect of such a guard is regal; and becoming a military monarch.

The foot guards of his majesty are comprised in three regiments, under the titles of the first, second, and Finish guards. Formerly, each regiment contained eight hundred men, but now they are reduced to five hundred. I also saw the only corps of life guards *à cheval;* they were wretchedly mounted,

and not very martially attired; their dress being white with blue returns; round hats awkwardly ornamented with bear skin, and other accompaniments not at all conducive to their soldierlike appearance. The heads of the foot guards, also, are covered with a round hat, turned up on one side with a yellow cockade and feather: all the infantry have this latter decoration.

The navy wear blue, with a metal epaulet; round hats, and very high feathers, rather a troublesome appendage, I should suppose, in a gale of wind. But useless, or rather inconvenient as the plume may be at sea, there is yet another ordered essential in their dress ten times worse in both respects: spurs! Not only officers of every description belonging to the army wear them, by a special ordinance, but even the naval officers are obliged to put them on. These last gentlemen, until they arrive at the rank of admiral, are distinguished by the military titles of major, colonel, &c.

The forces of the line are raised in the provinces on a similar plan with our militia; each district being obliged to furnish a given number of infantry or troops. These regiments do not remain embodied, as a continued standing army, but serve merely during the war. I am told, that in less than six hours a battalion of a thousand or two men can be got together, armed and equipped for instant service. In the province to which they belong, the peasantry are constrained, by an order of state, to convey them in wagons to a certain rendezvous, and leave them there within a given period; so as to insure the assembling of the strength of the kingdom, at any fixed point, in a short time.

During the absence of the soldiers, their fellow peasants are obliged to till the ground belonging to each military individual, that his family may not suffer by the service he is gone to render to his country. Surely there is reason in this; wisdom as well as humanity. A subsistence being provided for the wives and children of soldiers, much wretchedness, and its consequent beggary and plunder, are prevented: instead of mendicants and robbers, useful citizens are reared to the state. And one prevention to insure the health of the body politic, is

worth half a score remedies to heal a constitution, which must be crazed by repeated disorders. Should the soldier be killed, or die in the service, the neighbour peasants continue their care of his family, till the boys be old enough to cultivate for themselves. By this arrangement, the Swede goes forth for the defence of his country with a free mind: while he is absent, that country will protect his family; and should he die, the same would provide for them, till years and strength render it no longer necessary.

The officers have houses and lands assigned them according to their military rank; on each individual's death it devolves to his regimental successor: so that in time of peace they live amongst the peasants who have formed, and may again, hereafter, their respective corps. Consequently the attachment of the men to their commanders is often so firm, that in the defence of some of their officers, they have been known to stand till they were cut piecemeal. The plan is not unlike that of the clanships of Scotland, where the chief, by his title of superiority, residence amongst a certain race, protection and kindness, makes himself such a power in their hearts, that they are ready to follow him to the extremity of the globe, to life or death. There is something very patriarchal in this mode of national defence; its sufficiency seeming to depend more on the affection of the people than the authority of the king. Such a foundation is the strongest: it was the ground of the mighty Gustavus of Sweden. And who will say, but to be thus a monarch, is to reign indeed!

The noble Swede who was my conductor through the military department, next led me to view the architectural ornaments of Stockholm. The first we visited was the church of Adolphus Frederic, the grandfather of the present king. He was much beloved by the country; and during his reign made many beneficial alterations in the laws. His memory rendered the building interesting; although its architectural perfections were few indeed. Being the most modern religious edifice of consequence in Stockholm, it is regarded with admiration by the inhabitants. Nothing without or within deserves their

eulogiums excepting the altarpiece and a fine monument, both the work of Sergal.

The first is plaster of Paris, a basso relievo of the resurrection of our Saviour. The subject is simply and beautifully treated. Christ is ascending with extended arms, his face elevated towards heaven. Three angels harmoniously group with his divine figure, being in the attitude of supporting the stone which has opened from the tomb. The drapery in which the body had been wrapped, is exquisitely disposed, and admirably unites the design. In the corner, at the bottom, sits a soldier, the only mortal in the scene; and he sleeps! The sentiment of the sculpture teems with thought: I leave it not in unprofitable hands when I resign it to yours.

A little to the right of the altar is a monument erected in the year 1777, to the memory of a nobleman who died in 1560. It is of bronze, and surpasses almost every specimen of the kind I have seen: in short, I cannot speak too highly of the design, or sufficiently eulogize the undescribable beauty of its expression. It is an angel holding up in his left hand the torch of life, which is extinguished; with his right he unveils the world by raising a piece of drapery: emblematic, I suppose, that death, while it destroys our mortal fires, opens the universe to the sight of our unembodied spirit. If this be not the explanation of Mr. Sergal's allegory, I have read his sculptured eloquence amiss; but though I may be mistaken in that mystery, you will not discredit my eyes when I tell you, that the execution of this monument, the globe, the drapery, and the cloud, so judiciously blending with the angel, gave me a thousand times the pleasure I received from the altarpiece, or the newly erected statue of the late king.

It would be dangerous to step forward as the first criticiser of the latter work. I dare hardly allow myself to see any thing but beauties in this great and last labour of genius. Only a few, the inhabitants of Stockholm and its environs, have yet seen it; and how can I presume to judge of what deserves the suffrages of a world. Being but a young scholar in the school of arts, I fear to speak before my seniors in experience; and besides, respect for the venerable artist, who dedicated so much

anxiety to the completing of the statue, hoping, as it would be his last, it would also prove his most perfect work, rather withholds me from saying aught in its prejudice. However, as writing to you is only another mode of thinking, I will make no further hesitation, but hazard a few remarks on what really struck me as adverse to its merit, when I had an opportunity of visiting it alone, and of inspecting it at my leisure.

Its situation is excellent. The rising ground, which gradually ascends in front of the statue, enables the observer to view it on any plain, and at any distance. Indeed it may even be looked down upon: so commanding is the opposite ascent. But here art contradicts nature. When a proper point is discovered to see it from to the best advantage, you find yourself too far removed; as all its minor beauties are lost in the distance. This fault arises from the height of the porphyry pedestal, which is not only of itself too high, but is additionally elevated by three or four lofty steps. These foundations raise the figure so much above the proper level, that its grandeur is impaired, and the effect, as a colossal statue, totally lost. So far the pedestal only I blame. The figure itself is full of majesty; but there is a something about the shoulders extremely awkward; an appearance of being shrugged. It cannot be meant as the form of the king, but must be an error in the disposition of the drapery; however, it is very unfortunate, as it deprives the figure of that ease it would otherwise have possessed. The head seems much too small; as bad a defect in the one extreme, as too large a one is in the other. The face, I am told, is a striking likeness of his late majesty; and bears in every feature the stamp of greatness, with an expression of goodness that recals his fate with redoubled regret. Take the whole of the lower part of the figure, and it appears too slight for the shoulders; and when is added to them, a vast redundancy of robe, the effect is altogether heavy and discordant. With due deference to the genius and taste of Mr. Sergal, I think he might have arranged the drapery of this admirably picturesque dress much better. The parts of it are well adapted to the full display of the finest human proportions; and as the king was beautifully shaped by

nature, I cannot but regret that the artist has not more gracefully disposed the robe round the figure.

The attitude is thus: the right hand holds an olive branch; the left, the rudder of an ancient galley. The design seems to refer to the Peace of Vanela, and the Victory of the Galleys. He is resting on his left foot; the other is thrown back, giving the statue a kind of expected motion. Indeed the whole of the composition resembles the Apollo Belvidere. The dress is that of the Swedish navy, worn some time ago; and being of the Spanish fashion, corrected by a simple Grecian taste, is admirably adapted either for the pencil or the chisel.

During my visits to this statue, and they were not unfrequent; for the faults I have noticed were by far outnumbered by its beauties; my Swedish friend was often my companion, who seldom approached the image of Gustavus III., without recounting some event redounding to his fame. But the circumstances of his death, which, though sad, seemed, in repeating, to gratify his sorrow, by giving him an opportunity to indulge it, were his favourite theme. He made it apparent that parties disturbed the late king's reign with a violence they have never attempted in this. Gustavus, by pardoning their defection, emboldened them to greater audacity; and so proved, that generosity often only arms its enemy. Few who are base enough to injure, know how to estimate forgiveness; either too hard to repent, or too proud to be grateful, they repay forbearance with insolence, and clemency with treason. The revenge a man will not take, their meanness thinks he cannot; and what springs from the strength of goodness, is by them despised as a proof of weakness.

Three young men, of whom Ankarstroem was the leader, in a fit of political fanaticism, took a solemn oath to destroy the king. When we hear of these invocations of the Deity amongst infamous conspirators, does it not make us tremble at the dreadful inconsistency of man. What is it they swear? and to whom do they swear? Murder,—and to God! It is tremendous blasphemy: and even with them can only arise from inconsideration or art. What can bind him who, by the act he swears to commit, determines to break through the most powerful of

all bonds, the law not less of nature than of heaven? They who think there is any thing in a traitor's oath, more than the words which convey it, are as ignorant of man as of virtue.

These Swedish traitors cast lots for the first stroke at Gustavus. The bloody prize fell to Ankarstroem, who, armed with a *dentelated* dagger, and a pair of pistols charged with bullets and *nails*, (both weapons being calculated to render the death he gave more than usually agonizing), wrapped himself in his cloak, and entered the masquerade, where the king was to be present. The other conspirators were also in the apartment; but the deed was to be attempted by their leader. After hovering about his majesty for some time, they observed him retire for air into a less crowded part of the saloon, and lean against a pillar with his mask in his hand. Ankarstroem slid cautiously behind him, and lodged the contents of one of the pistols in the small of his back. The monarch fell. "It is a Frenchman!" cried he. But alas! he lived to learn it was a Swede; and felt a more deadly wound at that information than even his ball had inflicted. He was shot on the fifteenth of March, and died the twenty-ninth, in a state of sufferings which the surgeons said they would have declared intolerable, had not the magnanimity of the king endured it all without a groan.

The agitation of my narrator, though so many years have past since the event, was so great when he spoke particularly on the subject, that while I respected the steadiness of his affection, I could not but increase my reverence of a prince, the loss of whom could awaken such never-ceasing regrets.

Among other anecdotes which my friend related to me of his deceased monarch, he described several gallant instances of a bravery seldom seen in kings since the romantic ages. One or two I cannot but repeat.

When Gottenburg, the most considerable city in Sweden next to Stockholm, was beleagured by the Norwegians under prince Charles of Hesse, Gustavus, having been basely betrayed by a refractory part of his army, flew to the mountains of Dalecarlia; and throwing himself upon the loyalty of that hardy people, informed them of the extremity in which the country lay, and called upon them, by the memory of their former

fame, to follow him to the walls of Gottenburg. Three thousand came forward at once; the example was contagious; Gustavus soon found himself at the head of a large army, and directed his march to the coast. But doubting that Gottenburg might surrender before it could have intimation of the coming succours, he determined to run every personal risk to save the city. Leaving the brave Dalecarlians under a trusty general, to follow with rapidity, he disguised himself, and attended by a single domestic, penetrated even through the camp of his enemies to the walls of Gottenburg. On appearing at the gates, he with much difficulty persuaded the Swedish guard to allow him to pass.—"If you doubt my being a friend," said he, "at least take me before your commander; should I prove the reverse, I shall then be your prisoner."

Gustavus was conducted to the military governor; and what was his surprise at beholding in a man brought to him as a spy, his august sovereign! The news was the trumpet of victory. The Delecarlians arrived. The king appeared at the head of the garrison; and, aided by other favourable circumstances, the siege was raised, and Gottenburg rescued from a foreign yoke by the intrepidity of its monarch.

This action was not more gallant by land than the battle of the galleys was by sea. The Swedes fitted out a fleet of this kind of vessels with gunboats, to oppose one of a similar construction sent out by the empress of Russia under the command of the prince of Nassau. Gustavus put himself on board one of these galleys, and after a desperate battle with the prince, captured thirty of his ships; but being afterwards hemmed in by two immense Russian squadrons in the gulf of Viborg, the whole fleet must inevitably have surrendered, had his majesty been less determined to run every danger for the honour of Sweden.

Some on board recommended him to give up the day as lost: but like our dauntless Nelson, it may be said *he never knew fear;* and supported in his impregnable resolution by another of our thunderbolts of war, the king, pouring a broadside to the right and left, led the way; and cutting through the very centre of his enemies, not only escaped with honour, but turn-

ing round to face the astonished galleys, before the rocks of Schvenko-sund, again grappled with the prince of Nassau, took from him nearly fifty vessels, with ten thousand prisoners, and returned to Stockholm covered with glory. Great bravery was displayed in the contest: and while both were admirable as enemies, who but must regret that they are not always friends? From this victory arose the peace of Vanela, which not only rejoiced the harassed Swedes, but filled St. Petersburgh with illuminations.

To express Gustavus' sense of the share our brave Englishman had in the success of the day, he knighted him on the spot with the grand cross of the noble order of the sword. Not satisfied with this, he asked Sir Sidney what he should give him as a remembrancer of Schvenko-sund? The knight replied, "Your majesty's picture."—"No, my brave friend," returned the king, "you shall have your own!" and he the next day sent him a fine portrait of Charles the Twelfth. The compliment was worthy of the prince, and of the British hero.

Like Cæsar, I say, "happy was Alexander who had arrived at the prize of his career, before the Roman had started!" Though I have also received the honour of knighthood, I yet consider my *spurs are to be won;* and in obedience to the higher powers, it will not be very long before I try their metal. A few days ago I was honoured by the official investiture of the Equestrian order of St. Joachim, electing me a knight commander, &c. &c. My diploma was dated May, 1807: but owing to continental disturbances, I did not receive it till now. You can believe, that as this is one of the orders of which our immortal Nelson was a brother, I consider the honour I bear as doubled, by its making me a knight of his fraternity; and all I now want to make my star shine without a cloud, is the approval of my own revered sovereign of the distinctions I have received. They are estimable to your friend, not because of the title they confer, but as a witness of that esteem having been adjudged to him by foreign nations, which will ever be his ambition to deserve in his own. I should be unworthy of your friendship were not these the sentiments of your faithful friend.

LETTER XXXIX.

Upsal, March, 1808.

IT happened as I expected: news arrived from the frontiers which put all Stockholm in consternation. The Russians had passed the Swedish lines, and advanced as far as Louisa, a seaport town in the province of Nyland, on the north coast of the gulf of Finland. No information of this intended invasion having been intimated to the court of Stockholm by the Russian ambassador, the king issued orders for his arrest; and immediately he and his suite were confined to his hotel under a guard of cavalry, without permission to communicate with any person within or without the town.

Thus then the javelin has been mutually thrown; war is declared: and as there is no calculating on what may be its events, I shall make the most of my time; and at this early period of hostilities, set forward to take my intended tour of the interior. In this frame of mind, I prepared to bid a short adieu to Stockholm; and being provided with an agreeable companion in Mr. F——s (a son of the good Sir William F——s of Edinburgh, whose name need only be mentioned to excite the liveliest respect), I left the city: having previously received from a Swedish gentleman a useful route, with directions to render our northern travelling as easy and pleasant as possible.

His first advice was, that we should not hire a sledge, but purchase one, which might be done for a trifle. Did we commit ourselves to the chance of engaging vehicles on the road, the consequence might be dangerous; as the hackney sledges are in general insecure and very comfortless. One horse is sufficient for your machine, if you be content to adopt one of the season; but should vanity, or inexperience lead you to prefer a carriage on pattens, you must then have three or four horses; with the inconvenience in these narrow ways, of moving slowly, and very often at the imminent risque of being upset. The Swedish sledge is therefore the best conveyance in winter: but should the journey be in summer, then I recommend your

own English carriage by all means; as there is nought you can hire along the roads, in the shape of vehicles, but mere rustic carts.

To proceed with rapidity, it is requisite to send forward to the various posts a *forbode* or courier (what antiquary will gainsay that our verb to *forebode* sprung from this very noun? Indeed, there are clear traces in the language of Britain of the former visits of our northern neighbours to this island). The foreboding, foreseeing, foredoing gentleman, or by whatever name you choose to call him, orders horses to wait you at every station, according to the fixed hour when he expects you will arrive. By him, all your heavy baggage is sent; and so honest are the people, that there would be no hazard of any being stolen, should it remain, without your appearance, from this to doomsday. But should you not appear at the different stages to the time your forbode has appointed, this inconvenience ensues; the boors may return to their respective homes with the horses; you are obliged to pay double for them on your arrival, and have the additional punishment of waiting until others are brought. An error of this kind at the first post, generally occasions a default of time to all the rest; and so disappointment, delay and expense accompanies you throughout the journey.

The peasant who brings the animals, is contented with two or three schillings for his douceur; about two pence English. Charioteers, or postillions you have none: you are obliged either to hire a person expressly for that purpose, or to drive yourself, which, if travelling day and night, would be no very agreeable amusement. The actual tax for each horse per mile, (six English), fixed by law in 1800, is twelve schillings rix money, about nine pence of ours. This, in starting from the country; but if from any city, the price is double.

The variation in the length of the mile of different countries, is very troublesome to travellers, who may not be exactly aware of the allotted ground in each. I found it very vexatious at first; and that you may not stumble where I fell, and be benighted where I expected day, I shall, while I think of it, give you a little calculation of miles according to the measurement of our neighbouring nations: ten five-eighths of Swedish miles

make a degree, and are equivalent to fifteen German, twenty-five geographical French miles, fifty English, seventy-five Italian miles, and one hundred Russian versts.

Having taken the necessary precaution for a journey into the interior, of providing our sledge with eatables, I set forth with my friend. The velocity with which we passed over the frozen lakes and high grounds, was even more amazing than that which I had experienced in Russia; and we arrived at Upsal about eleven at night, having quitted Stockholm at five the same evening, being a distance of seven Swedish miles. In summer the circuit is longer, as the waters, being then released, do not allow the short cuts now made by crossing over their icy bosoms. The borders of these glassy plains are richly wooded, and adorned with numerous country residences belonging to the nobility.

It being dark when we entered this ancient town, you must pardon me that I gave you no account of its approach. It is built on the banks of the river Fyris, and altógether exhibits a very venerable appearance. Old historians tell us, that Upsal was a city in the year of our Lord 240, when Ingo, on being elected king of Sweden, after the death of his father, a wise and brave monarch, fixed his residence here, choosing often to be called king of Upsal. At present, instead of a royal palace, it boasts a fine cathedral, in which the monarchs of Sweden are usually crowned. From the earliest times, erudition does not seem to have been neglected at Upsal; some of its kings, from their superior learning, acquired the name of magicians, the general appellation given to sages by the northern barbarians. In later ages, in the year 1247, Eric XI. instituted a university here, which was afterwards very richly endowed both by Gustavus Vasa and Gustavus Adolphus. One part of this establishment being built by the latter monarch, is called *Academia Gustaviana*. These places I purpose going particularly through, and then I will duly initiate you into all their mysteries.

Upsal is the see of the primate of Sweden. His dignity once overtopped that of the throne: he was a senator by his office; and possessed such an immense church patrimony, that nothing could withstand the power of his riches. His palace and retinue

were more magnificent than the king's; and, indeed it may be said, that until the accession of Gustavus Vasa the archbishop of Upsal was sovereign in Sweden. Since the protestant profession in that kingdom, the overweening power of the metropolitan is limited within the proper bounds; and we now see that holy simplicity, blended with the grandeur of sacerdotal dignity, which best becomes a representative of the apostles. Through the kindness of one of my Swedish friends in the capital, I was provided with letters of introduction to Lindblome the present archbishop, and also to the professors of the university.

Being so well introduced, the morning after our arrival we paid our respects to his grace, and delivering our credentials, were received with a suavity and kindness which left us at ease in a moment. There was no cold stateliness in his demeanor; nothing to remind us that he was the first religious character in the kingdom, and we two humble travellers in our one horse sledge, visiting him perhaps out of curiosity. He welcomed us as friends, insisted upon our making no other house but his palace our home while we staid at Upsal. It was not a mere civil offer, but sincerely insisted on with a cordiality that persuaded, more than the comforts he promised. Thus established in his family, he gave orders to the people about him, that every object in, and near the city, worthy notice, should be shown us; and that our wishes should be obeyed in all things. There was something, I would have said, royal in this primate's hospitality; but I ought rather to have said, it was most eloquent of the religion he professed, all munificence, cheerfulness, and dignity. The kindnesses he dispensed seemed so much a part of his own nobleness, that he did not condescend to consider them obligations. They were friends whom he received, not dependents. Endowing his guests with every consideration belonging to his own honour, he maintained his dignity by asserting theirs; and while behaving to them with the same courtesy he would have used to a prince, he elevated his character at the moment he raised theirs. This is a refinement in hospitality practised by none but the greatest minds. Little ones, thinking their dignity cannot afford to allow much to

others, in general treat their guests with indifference; not aware that in so acknowledging, by their conduct, that their friends are contemptible, they lower themselves in the eyes of observers to the level they affect to contemn. Intimates must ever seem on a par.

The archbishop was an invalid: and owing to his indisposition, he told us, he had been obliged to transfer a ceremony he was that day to perform, from the cathedral to his palace. It was the inauguration of a bishop. Naming the hour, he invited us to be present, and meanwhile sent one of his librarians to see that we were conducted to all the noteworthy quarters of the town.

We first visited the university of Gustavus Adolphus, and were ushered into the grand public library. The repository of learning is richly stored with volumes of all ages, languages, and authors; besides above a thousand manuscripts of great value and antiquity. One, esteemed the most precious in their possession, bound splendidly in solid silver, was laid before us. The celebrated *Codex Argenteus*. It was found at Prague; and long afterwards presented to this library by the count de la Gardé. A beautiful edition with notes and illustrations printed at the Clarendon press, Oxford, lies near it; to render the examination of the original more easy to the curious. This interesting book contains a translation of the four Evangelists into the Mesogothic language, by Ulphilas, bishop of Thrace. He acquired that title from having converted the Thracians to christianity. To make you a little better acquainted with Ulphilas, I shall scribble you a rough learner-like translation of a few particulars related in an old account of Upsal, written in Swedish.

"This holy man, Ulphilas, bishop of Thrace, lived in the fourth century, during the reigns of the emperors Valens and Valentianus. His translation of the gospels is consequently older than that by Hieronomy, which, of all the Latin versions, is supposed to be of the greatest antiquity. The book of Ulphilas is in all respects a valuable acquisition: it not only gives us a most interesting acquaintance with the old Gothic language, but also affords us a knowledge of its letters. It likewise shows

the ancient method of printing: for, without a doubt, the work in question is not written by the hand."

This little tract then proceeds to give the following account of the mode in which this style of letter-press was executed.

"It is done on a parchment of a purple coloured ground, with letters of silver. Every sheet is divided into given lines. The place for each line being covered with a kind of transparent glue (which is plainly perceptible in the sun), the silver or gold was spread over it; and the types made of brass, or of some other hard metal previously heated, were pressed firmly down, which fixed their form on the skin." The professors of Upsal told me that this mode of printing was an invention of the ancient Goths.

The *Codex Argenteus* was long hidden from the learned world: its existence was not even known, while it lay lost amongst a collection of books belonging to the friars of Verden. During the German war, this library was removed to Prague, where the volume in question fell into the hands of field-marshal Königsmarc. In 1648 he gave it to Isaac Vossius, queen Christina's librarian, who took it to England in the year 1655, where count Magnus de la Gardé purchased it for four hundred rix dollars; and bringing it to Sweden, made it a present to the university of Upsal. Probably its name arises from the letters being silver: one would scarcely imagine that a cover of that metal would give a title page to the book.

We next had the gratification of taking into our hands one of the first impressions of the bible. It had been the constant companion of the studies of Martin Luther; and opposite the title page is a letter in his own handwriting. Having carefully examined the sacred volume, which was quite perfect, a heathen work was unfolded to us. The manuscript of the *Edda*. It was found in Iceland; and is said to have been composed by Snore Sturlstone, one of the rulers of that insulated country. He is supposed to have lived long before the introduction of christianity into any of the northern states. The work is mythological and contains the religious doctrines of the Scandinavian Odin. Not being master of the key, all its mysteries were locked to me: but the professor who showed it, said, that its passages

are extremely interesting, and full of very curious information. There is something very provoking in turning over the leaves of famous books, when we are ignorant of their language. Our feelings, in such a case, are not dissimilar to what would have been a completely deaf man's, standing in the forum where Cicero was speaking.

The Edda is written on parchment, and contains several rude drawings, resembling astronomical figures. It is found that these Pagans, at religious meetings, made a sign on their breasts, not unlike that of the cross used by the Greek and Latin churches. Theirs was in commemoration of the battle-ax of their god THOR. I am not learned enough in ecclesiastical rites, to know the origin of most of them: but when we cannot trace the ordinance which happens to strike us in the scripture itself, we may perhaps find it where we least expect, as it is very probable that converted heathens would carry a few of their old practices into their new religion; only a little modifying them to the occasion, like the transformation of the Pantheon at Rome into a church of the true God. These resemblances, few as they are, between the ceremonies of the pagan and the christian world, are cavilled at by unthinking people, who are apt to say christianity borrows this and that from paganism; when the fact is, as christianity stands simple in the gospel, it is intire of itself, insulated from all communion with other religions by a flood of light unspotted with any formalities. Its only enjoined rites are baptism and the Lord's Supper. Hence, whatever else we see about it, whether marking with the cross, or any other ceremony; if we can date them from heathen sources, they have been borrowed by man, and christianity has nothing to do with them.

It would be tedious, as well as tantalizing to you, whose favourite banquet is a good library, to name all the rare books we turned over. In fact, this *bibliotheque* contains every early and curious edition of the most scarce and renowned works, to the number, I am told, of eighty thousand volumes.

The saloons are large and well adapted to the studious purpose to which they are assigned. In one of them stand two large chests, iron-bound, sealed and strongly padlocked. They

were deposited here by the will of his late majesty Gustavus III. who ordered that they were not to be opened till fifty years after his death. Various are the conjectures on their contents. Perhaps, one sheet of paper in each, containing a suitable and wholesome reflection! In the same building is the hall for public lectures; an anatomical theatre founded by Rubeck; an astronomical observatory planned by Celsius; and a botanical garden laid out by Linnæus! All, classic ground, you will say. Having enjoyed this mental treat with as much pleasure as the extreme cold would allow, at the appointed hour we returned to our friend the archbishop, to be present at the expected ceremony.

On reentering the state apartments of the palace at two o'clock, we found a great assemblage of persons. His grace, and those to be employed in the official duties, were already habited in their religious vestments, and on the moment of commencing the sacerdotal rites. The archbishop was apparelled in long robes of gold tissue superbly embroidered, with a jewelled mitre on his head, and a full embossed crosier in his hand. The serene expression of his countenance, and the height of his person, gave a holy command to his figure, which the magnificence of his sacred habit increased, by reminding us of the prophet Samuel. On a table opposite him lay a bible richly bound in crimson velvet; also the official documents of the new suffragan's dignity: the episcopal oath; and paper of reception signed by the hand of the king.

The clergyman who awaited his approaching elevation, stood in the front, to receive the investiture of his rank, as well as the righteous admonitions of his superior. After the archbishop had most emphatically delivered a short sermon on the occasion, the oath was administered, the cross suspended by a gold chain was hung round his neck; the robe was put upon his shoulders; and then kneeling, he received the holy benediction, the crosier being at the same time placed in his hand. A few minutes of silent prayer elapsed, and the newly invested rising, the surrounding clergy saluted him *Bishop of Calmar*.

The habits of the archbishop, of his lordship of Calmar, and of four others placed on each side of his grace, were all magni-

ficently splendid. Two of the four bishops were in black velvet, richly embroidered with silver; having on their breasts a triangle and glory with the Hebrew characters customary in that symbol. On their backs, the cross of Christ is wrought in silver, with the crown of thorns, &c. The rest of the consecrated assembly were surpliced in white. An hour saw the completion of the ceremony. To-morrow a dinner is to be given by the primate in honour of the new bishop; a scene which, I make no doubt will present as much food for the mind, as for the palate. I know not exactly how many of the holy college I shall see; but I am told that thirteen bishops now form the number which hold that dignity in Sweden; formerly there were no more than six. The archbishop of course takes precedence of them all, having besides the subordinate classes of the clergy under his sacred crosier.

Being, as it appears, on consecrated ground, you shall hear more from me on similar subjects to-morrow; meanwhile, sharing the good archbishop's blessing with you, I commit you to heaven, and remain ever your faithful friend.

LETTER XL.

Upsal, March, 1808.

OUR morning's walk was to the cathedral. Its architecture is gothic, but spoiled by the materials of which it is built, being merely brick of a very bad colour. From this cause its outward ornaments are few, having none but on the entrances, which are composed of stone. The great front is flanked with two towers, formerly surmounted by spires; another was elevated from the centre of the church, when a fire happening by some unexplained accident, burnt them all three; and in their stead a set of brick lanterns are erected, of an awkward Roman architecture; thus, as we too often do in our country, ruining both styles by so preposterous a union.

The age of the cathedral is not ascertained precisely. It is generally supposed to have had its first stone laid by Charles the seventh, (called by the Swedes Carl Suerkerson), in the year 1162; and it is very probable, for he was not only an excellent prince, but very eminent for public acts of piety. He entombed his predecessor the pious Eric the Ninth in this church; and to give all ecclesiastical respect to the priesthood in his dominions, was the first who elevated the see of Upsal to the archiepiscopal dignity. For this purpose he obtained a bull from Pope Alexander III., who consecrated Stephanus archbishop of Upsal.

The interior of the church, like most other cathedrals in this country, is formed of a long broad aisle, and two side ones of narrower dimensions. The pillars are of the simple gothic in clusters. The adjacent parts of the edifice are equally plain, corresponding in the same want of ornament so faithfully, that not even a rose finishes the centre of the many arches which terminate themselves along the roof. While I looked at it, I could not help thinking, that after all the homage that monarch paid to the papal chair, his holiness was very ungrateful not to send one sprig from his consecrated tree to bloom across these naked walls. The whole has been painted white, a violent de-

stroyer of that mild religious light so harmonious with the purpose of these buildings. A similar bad taste has daubed the capitals of all the columns with a dark lead colour, which gives them the effect of so many smoking chimneys.

Amongst the numerous monuments which filled the aisles, my eye was first arrested by that of Gustavus Vasa. The image of the king is placed between the effigies of his two wives. If the figure resembles the hero, he must have been very like our representations of Edward the third. His countenance is so fine, that to enable you to enjoy its venerable lines as well as myself, I inclose a sketch that I made from an excellent picture of this monarch. The monument is of white marble, of which material the statue of the great Gustavus is sculptured, habited in armour. His queens are richly dressed in robes of state.

If kings could guess what passes in their subject's minds while standing over the grave of a good monarch, they would understand the true secret of power; they would comprehend the real meaning of the eastern salutation, *may the king live for ever!* He lives for ever whose beneficial reign establishes his name in the memories of the people to the latest posterity.

Many other tombs of the illustrious dead, scattered the pavement in sad ruins. Another *memento mori*, that all the *storied urns* and *animated busts* which ever attempted to eternize the fame of man, have their day of mouldering; and are indeed of no use towards their great aim, unless the name they celebrate is of sufficient worth to be its own monument.

You will smile at so many grave remarks from me; but recollect where I am: as Solomon says, there is a time for every thing! and you would not have me playing the harlequin over the graves of saints and heroes. Little more than half a score years ago, you conducted me with many a gay prank through the wonders of Westminster Abbey! But since then, having lost with our schoolboy gowns the better stuff within, to turn all shows of gravity to *a mirthmoving jest*; since, as the old women say, "the black cow has trod so heavily on our heels," you must be content to follow my *cowed* footsteps a *grave* pace round the tombstones. I prithee do not knock me down with one of them, for thus, even in a church, breaking out into my

old sin; and one too, so enormous, that a pope greater than Hildebrand, denounced it to be "worse than picking a pocket." However, I will atone for my transgression by showing you all the treasures of this cathedral; and first I lead you to the shrine of St. Eric.

It is of massy silver, and encircles the remains of that holy and brave monarch. Being descended of an ancient family, well known in Sweden by the name of Bondé, he was elected king in 1150; his valour having recommended him to the people, rather than the piety which afterwards obtained his canonization. Under his auspices religion made rapid strides. He entered Finland at the head of an army, less as an object of ambition, than to propagate the christian faith. His presence awed the natives to submission without a drop of blood; and taking it as a good omen vouchsafed to his zeal, he not only dispersed missionaries throughout the provinces, but became an apostle himself; and endeavoured with all possible ardour to complete the conversion of the people. Those whom he found so obstinate in their errors as to refuse baptism, he banished the country, consigning them to the sterile providence of the gods they served. On returning to Upsal he collected the ancient laws of the kingdom into one body, adding new edicts of his own of the first importance to the welfare of the public. But these peaceful virtues were so far from gaining the hearts of a people accustomed to outrage and plunder, that they became incensed, and in all parts rose in rebellion. To attempt to execute the laws of justice and equity at a time, and in a country where force and power were reckoned sufficient arguments to excuse, and even to justify injury, was so mighty a crime in their eyes, that they could endure him no longer. He was attacked during divine service on Ascension-day, in the year 1161, by a party of his ungrateful subjects, under Magnus Henrickson, king of Denmark. When he was told that the enemy surrounded the house, he answered, "Let me rest till mass is over. I trust in God either to fight for me, or to receive me. I cannot sufficiently serve him." The walls were scaled, and a dreadful battle ensued. After a most gallant resistance the king surrendered; but the brutal Danish monarch had him instantly stripped and

beheaded within sight of both armies. The scene of this murder is the very spot on which the church called Denmark has since been built.

In a recess to the left on entering the church, is a flat monument of porphyry, dedicated to the celebrated Linnæus. His profile is in relievo on a small oval tablet, bearing a simple inscription, merely recording the time of his birth and death. After wandering with little or no interest amongst the remaining tombs, we were at length led into a low cell which contained the relics of ancient popery. Chalices, crucifixes, holy vestments, and sundry other vestiges of catholic worship, met our eyes. One cross of silver, of an immense size, was not unworthy of notice; the workmanship was very curious and rich; in parts many deep cavities were visible, which had formerly been filled with precious stones. At the foot of this consecrated emblem is a considerable piece of the real cross, a present from one of the popes to the fathers of Upsal. From the numerous *morceaux* of this kind I have met in my narrow travels, I cannot but suppose that the providers of Europe with these relics must have had a forest of them. I have seen likewise, at least, five hands of the same sainted martyr, who, not to suspect the truth of the monks that possessed them, must undoubtedly have been a descendant of Briareus.

One singular piece of antiquity was presented to us, the remains of a standard made of a shift that belonged to one of the ancient queens, I believe Margaret de Valdemar. If this were her majesty's last garment of the kind, in a double sense she must have been sadly reduced: though how that should happen I cannot make out, as she died imperial over three kingdoms; and therefore more likely to have made her final exit in a robe of tissue, than in one of the present fabric. The ensign was surely sufficient to determine its bearer to stand; to inspire its followers with tenfold ardor: what soldier could desert such a banner? What knight would not fight more valiantly before its snowy lawn, than under the standard of Cæsar? A queen's shift is so *unique* a palladium to defend, so rare a trophy to win, that I do not doubt the most desperate acts of valor took place in the contention of who was to possess the honoured

linen which once inveloped the delicate person of a royal dame. I cannot omit observing that it was not the finest I ever saw, but quite the contrary. How it happened to be thus exposed, I cannot easily guess: she would hardly make a present of so rough a *chemise* to her lover Broderson; and he would not be such a telltale as to transform it into an ensign for his troops: no, I am rather inclined to regard it as a penitential garment. We have heard of folks mourning their sins in sackcloth; and probably that ambitious queen might choose now and then so to humble her body for the pride of her soul—a fashionable way in those days of compounding for the sins they were determined to keep. This then might be her robe of mortification; and no bad trophy for the monks to show of their royal mistress's piety. So enamoured am I of my guess work, that I have now no doubt it was under this banner, Eric Trolle, the warlike primate of Sweden, marched against the virtuous Steno and the great Gustavus, to dispossess the former of the supreme power; and to enforce the union of Calmar, the darling object of this beauteous Amazon. So far my history of the royal shift.

In one corner of the sacristy stands a block of oak, rudely sculptured into a head and body; time, accident and ill usage having deprived it of the other parts, and us of the pleasure of viewing so ancient an idol complete. The god THOR is the object of our contemplation. The head is by no means bad; its character is beyond mediocrity, and possesses much of the general air of the antiques which represent Jupiter: at least as far as the rude instruments of barbarism on wood could give an idea of divinity. This curious remain was brought from the old pagan temple not far distant from the city; and is believed, by the learned, to have been the chief idol of those dark ages. The sight of this savage god finished the rarities of the cathedral; and expressing our wish to be conducted to the ancient temple, by the assistance of his grace's carriage, we were conveyed to the spot.

It is now become the parish church of Old Upsal, a town to the north of Upsal, and like it, once the residence of kings. On leaving the more youthful capital, we past over a vast plain

which has often flowed with the blood of contending armies. Its name is romantic enough to inspire many a modern poet with rhyming propensities; just the word to close each stanza to admiration of some metrical ballad singing the chiefs of other times. Attend! and thank me for the *first refusal*, even if you do not take fire at the sound.—THE PLAIN OF FURISSIVAL! What can be better? How sonorous, how wild, how descriptive of deeds of arms! Don Quixote would have run mad upon it; and Ariosto's raptures would have sung forth an eulogy of northern heroes, that would have made his Orlandos and Tholands look like fools. Besides this magical sound, the scene is fraught with poetical applications. It is bounded by several high mounds, raised in memory of fallen chieftains; every one of which has its own legend, full of adventures and chivalric glory.

But to my temple. It is said to be the only remnant of the sort now standing in Sweden: and if ancient chronicles tell true, it also would have been swept away so early as the tenth century, if a royal mandate had been obeyed. King Eric the Seventh (an ancestor of the saint's) being converted to christianity by Adelwart and Stephanus, missionaries from Hamburgh, to signalize his religious zeal, ordered this very temple at Upsal to be demolished. But the people, looking upon such commands as a sufficient crime against their gods, instead of complying, stole upon the king at the dead of night, and sacrificed both him and the Germans to their offended deities. He is regarded as the first Swedish martyr.

The form of the temple was, as far as I could trace it amongst its present incumbrances, a parallelogram. The materials, masses of granite and flint. I did not find it difficult to distinguish the old Scandinavian walls from the more modern additions made to adapt the building to its reformed purposes. But, were you not apprised of its antiquity, the changes made by windows, doors, altar, and organ, have so new an appearance, that you would never guess its antichristian origin. Under its present peaceful roof, you would never suspect that hecatombs of beasts, and even man, had bled to appease imaginary deities. It has the burthen of a very ill constructed spire, which adds

grace neither to the one architecture nor to the other. Gibbon, in his Roman empire, mentions this very building, as near as I can recollect, as follows. (As my memory is not the most tenacious in the world, if I trip a little in the precise words, having not the books at hand, you will forgive me.)

"Till the end of the eleventh century a celebrated temple subsisted at Upsal, the most considerable town of the Swedes and Goths. It was enriched with the gold which the Scandinavians had acquired in their piratical adventures, and sanctified by the uncouth representations of their three principal deities: the God of War, the Goddess of Generation, and the God of Thunder."

A very few yards from the church are three high mounds, decidedly artificial, under which are said to be buried the remains of these deified personages, Odin, Friga, and Thor. Little now is left of the extensive forests which used to surround Upsal, and formed the religious retirements of the priests of Odin; but, as my before quoted author speaks of them, I shall again attempt to recal his words.

"In a general festival that was solemnized every ninth year, nine animals of every species, not excepting the human, were sacrificed, and their bleeding bodies suspended in the sacred groves adjacent to the temple. The only traces that now subsist of this barbarous superstition (thanks, I say, to the light of christianity!) are contained in the Edda, a system of mythology compiled in Iceland, and studied by the learned of Denmark and Sweden, as the valuable remains of their antiquities. Notwithstanding the mysterious obscurity of the Edda, we can easily distinguish two persons confounded under the name of Odin; the God of War, and the great legislator of Scandinavia. The latter, the Mahommed of the North, instituted a religion adapted to the climate and to the people. Numerous tribes on either side of the Baltic, were subdued by the invincible valor of Odin, by his persuasive eloquence, and by the fame he acquired of a most skilful magician."

Like Lycurgus, the principles he had propagated during a long and prosperous life, he confirmed by a voluntary death. Apprehensive of the ignominious effect of the approach of dis-

ease and infirmity, he resolved to expire as became a warrior. In a solemn assembly of the Swedes and Goths (perhaps convened in this very temple,) he wounded himself in nine mortal parts; hastening away, as he asserted with his dying breath, to prepare for them the feast of heroes in the palace of the God of War. It seems that the Edda, though an old northern work, was written in the thirteenth century. Hence, I should not be surprised to trace in it, as we may in the koran of Mahommed, many plagiarisms from the books of the apostles.

The author of the Edda makes Odin a lineal descendant from Priam of Troy. How he came by this pedigree, heaven knows; but, like most of the writers in those ages, neither absurdity nor falsehood ever were stumbling blocks in the way of establishing a determined point. However, the assertion is not improbable, and scholars generally admit the account as bearing many marks of truth. It is well known that at the fall of Troy both Grecian and Trojan heroes were put to the route; they had to seek homes on many a far distant shore. It is also ascertained that this military lawgiver emigrated northward from the coasts of the Caspian Sea, not far from the Tanais. He was accompanied by innumerable persons, whose eastern magnificence surprised the inhabitants of the shores of the Baltic; and by awe, gentleness, and persuasion, he soon brought these savages to a regular mode of government; directing his laws and institutions with the greatest wisdom and intrepidity. The Icelandish historian mentions, as a proof whence the prince and his retinue came, that the natives called them Aesir, or Asiatics. I cannot but pause a moment to observe what a favourable event to the world was the destruction of Troy. Its ten years' war, and consequent miseries seemed a school in which providence perfected those heroes whom he afterwards meant to distribute over the globe, as his lawgivers and instruments of civilization. Many, like Cyrus, know not the commander whom they serve.

Odin, it is said, fixed upon Upsal as the capital of his dominions; and Snore Sturlstone also gives him the credit of erecting the temple in question: but I must beg leave to dissent from that opinion; venerable as it may be, there is yet an

evidence beyond assertion, and that is fact. Now the fact is, that this ancient edifice is totally opposite in its architecture from the Asiatic magnificence; possessing nothing in the least similar with any buildings in that part of the world; and therefore *I make bold* to suggest that this temple was raised by the native worshippers of Thor, long before the arrival of Odin. The rudeness of the structure is a sufficient argument for this presumption. Odin may have decorated it with gold and silver, and superb consecrations, after the manner of his own country; but certainly the walls, which are now all that remains to us, are of old Scandinavian origin.

The head of the northern deities I have already mentioned was Thor. He was regarded as the most powerful. Odin and his wife Friga were not deified till some years after their deaths, when the zeal of one of their successors, and the veneration of the people, declared the royal pair to have been descended of gods. A belief in the immortality of the soul was amongst the principles of their religion: and not unlike the Mahommedan faith, they held the warrior creed, that those alone who fell in battle, or died a voluntary death, were admitted into the hall of gods and heroes; there to remain to all eternity, pledging each other in hydromel from the skulls of their enemies. This strange sort of Elysian saloon, where the spirits of warriors from all nations rioted, was supposed to be of the most agreeable heat; an enjoyment, to natives of the poles, fraught with eternal delights. The most horrid idea they could conceive of the hell to which their enemies were devoted, was a hell colder if possible than ice. Having passed several hours amidst these druidical remains, we returned from Odin and Thor, to the archbishop and his *feast of shells*.

Next morning, which was this morning, (having strayed on the former one so many centuries from New Upsal,) that I might give you a fair idea of the distant aspect of the city, I set forth to view it on the Stockholm side. As you approach, the castle presents itself on a commanding eminence. In past ages I do not doubt its barbaric magnificence; but at present, it is a poor representative of its royal predecessor, being a modern castellated structure, without any means of defence but

the governor within its walls. Having little to say in its praise, I will make up the deficiency by giving you an extract from a Swedish account I found in the university here, and which begins *right floridly*.

"Since the clear sun of the christian religion began to spread its rays over the sovereigns of Sweden, they removed from Old Gumla (old Upsal), which was still involved in the darkness of heathenism, to capitals more suitable to their brightening light. But when a firm establishment of the doctrines of Christ was generally fixed throughout the country, king Eric the saint took up his residence in Aros, the New Upsal. Even after the foundation and growing splendor of Stockholm, most of the sovereigns came to the ancient capital to be crowned; and many passed much of their time in its noble castle. But this royal building, like the city, has experienced sad reverses: from the unhappy period of Margaret's treaty of Calmar it has suffered by friends as well as foes; and plundered and sacked, it is now a mere shadow of its former greatness."

The city is situated on a plain; and the spots on which the castle and cathedral are placed, being elevated, a no inconsiderable air of consequence is imparted to the view. The adjoining woods are great ornaments to the suburbs; and stretch onward into the country to a great distance. This rich scenery, united with the fine river that flows through the town, renders the situation of Upsal remarkably pleasant. Writing of trees and shady banks, is very apt to bring into one's head the animated works of nature, which, in most countries, impart the sweetest charms to fields and groves. What is it our Campbell says of Paradise till Eve appeared?

> "The world was sad—the garden was a wild!
> And man, the hermit, sighed—till woman smiled!"

No woman, with smiles or without, visited our hermit eyes amongst the shades of Upsal. What they did with themselves I cannot guess; but not a single female under the age of fifty, ever indulged us with a glance even in the streets; and when the wind did condescend to blow their enormous veils aside that we might catch a glimpse of their faces, I can assure you

I felt no inclination to follow *Vapour's* example by falling in love with *my grandmother*.

Returning from our ramble, we directed our steps to the more attractive walks of the Botanic Garden: indeed I may say, that since my arrival I have been a very student; having passed three parts of every day in these admirable schools of the sciences. The edifice that contains the academy for botany and natural history, was erected on the plan of a Swedish architect. Its form is more whimsical than beautiful; being a strange mixture of temple, granary, and dwellinghouse, a kind of gigantic grotesque, like a lion springing from the cup of a daffodil. The portico in front is very ridiculous, besides being formed of clumsy pillars, in bad imitation of those which composed the temple at Pestum.

The outside only is to be blamed; internally all is in order. The institution is well conducted; and every department attended with the strictest attention. The collection of plants, though not very extensive, is good, and kept in an excellent state: but, neither you nor I having the honour to be botanists, the less that is said on the subject between us, so much the better. All my acquaintance with plants is by their beauty and their fragrance, and there I am their humble servant. Above one of these groves of sweets, namely the orangery, in which I regaled my sense of smelling for a good half hour, (Epicurus like, doubling my *pleasure* while one of my learned friends was holding forth), are the apartments for the Zoology. This department of the museum is very large. An immense saloon below contains animals of all kinds, stuffed, and otherwise prepared for preservation. The professor, Upsilius, possesses a private collection extremely interesting: he made it himself during his travels in Africa and other remote regions of the world.

The specimens of minerals in this university are very curious. But the medals being more to my taste (of which they have a large and excellently arranged collection), I dedicated a long time to their inspection: and so well pleased was I with my entertainment, and the urbanity of the professor, who condescended to point out to me beauties which otherwise I might

not have discovered, that I added Webb's admirable medal of the British hero of the Galleys to the number. Besides the fine execution of the die, the subject is so idolized in Sweden, that I could not have given the academy a more valued present. Having had several sent out to me from England, I had previously presented one to the royal collection at Stockholm; where it probably now lies by the sides of his brothers in fame.

I must not omit mentioning a suit of pictures in the anti-room to the medal apartment. They relate the story of Christian the Second; and of course are a representation of tyrannies and horrors. The dresses are highly interesting both to an antiquary and an artist. They are very ancient productions; and I am told the habits, military, ecclesiastical, and civil are quite correct. One of the pictures is particularly striking: it is a battle between the troops of the tyrant and the brave Dalecarlians. This academy was founded by Swanto Sture, the excellent administrator, in 1476. Pope Sextus IV. endowed it with similar privileges to that of Bologna; and some years afterwards, when the supreme office was filled by Steno, the virtuous son of Swanto, he made it large presents, amongst which might probably be these pictures.

I shall take my present farewel of Upsal, by making another extract from my Swedish author.

"The beginning of the academy may be compared to a clear morning which promises a beautiful day: but turbulent times, heavy misfortunes, inward controversies, and bloody wars, soon rolled darkness and thick clouds over the sky of Swedish learning. The muses were silenced; the youth were scattered abroad; the sages disappeared; and the academy, instead of being regarded as the garden of knowledge, became a desert. But seasons more tranquil have succeeded: Upsal rises from her decay, the youth of Sweden return, and the shores of the Baltic are again enlightened by her scientific fires."

My fire and my pen are both worn out for the night; the latter can hardly scrawl the adieu! of your faithful friend.

LETTER XLI.

Sala, March, 1808.

HAVING visited all above ground, we now proposed to explore the nether regions; and accordingly set forth for Dunamora, the nearest mine, and particularly celebrated for its iron and furnaces. Its depth is above eighty fathoms. The distance being little more than four Swedish miles from Upsal, we soon arrived at this interesting spot.

As we drove along and approached the vicinity of the mine, we were entertained by the picturesque effects of the villages inhabited by the miners, the forges and furnaces for working and smelting the iron when brought above the surface of the earth. These are on a very extensive scale, and employ daily about three hundred persons. On arriving at the mouth of this entrance to Hades, I found the monarch of the scene, the director, more than civil; the introduction of our archiepiscopal friend produced us the most polite attention; and having examined all around, our intelligent conductor attended us to view the wonders of the abyss.

The descent is not like that usually found, the opening being of a large extent, instead of the well-like perforation of common mines. The mode of passage is in casks, fixed to large cables, which are raised and lowered by means of horses. When they are filled with ore, the workmen, standing upon the edges of the vehicle, and having their arms clasped round the rope, ascend with the greatest composure. I occupied one half of the bucket appointed for my carriage, and the director the other, carrying bundles of wood in order to light us through the caverns. Mr. F——s descended in a second machine of the same sort.

The depth from the mouth to the surface of the water, now congealed, at the bottom, is sixty-five fathoms; the further depth through the ice to the old base, is twenty more. I was surprised at such a subterraneous mass of waters, when my conductor explained the circumstance, by informing me, that

about twelve or fourteen years ago a neighbouring lake rose to so great a height as to inundate that part of the country, and overflow the mine. The accident, for a time, stopped the labours of the workmen. A steam engine was constructed to draw off the waters so far as to enable the men to dig the ore. The water is drawn from the bottom by a wheel twenty-two yards in diameter, and is afterwards conveyed along an aqueduct two thousand five hundred yards in length. By these means ten fathoms of water being annually discharged, in the course of two years they will be able again to work in its ancient bottom.

I think I never beheld so sublime a sight as struck my eyes when, midway suspended between the upper and nether world, I looked towards the distant sky, or downwards into regions of a lurid night. The miners, with lighted torches, attended us through the various excavations and dark caverns which yawned from all quarters of the abyss. During our exploring walk we were suddenly arrested by a most tremendous sound, which, for a moment, struck us with undescribable horror; the earth shook under our feet; and we looked, I cannot tell how; but our conductor smiled, and told us, it was only the men blasting the rocks for the ore. As he spoke, the noise roared along the black avenues of the mine, reechoing through the higher vaults like the loud bellowings of thunder. To afford a shelter for the workmen during this hazardous part of their duty, a small retreat is constructed of thick beams; and here they retire in safety to await the expected explosion, which hurls the rent fragments with furious violence in every direction.

The extent of the mine is about eighteen hundred feet. Large as it is, the preeminence it bears in the eye of taste, arises from a peculiarity differing entirely from all others in the kingdom. The whole of the mine is laid open to the sky, having more the appearance of a gigantic cleft in the earth made by some convulsion of nature, than an effect of the industry of man. The people below had kindled a fire, the gray smoke from which made a picturesque contrast to the deep gloom that pervaded the rocky precipices: nearer the

mouth, the bright light of the sun's rays shone upon the cliffs and hanging icicles, which glittered like so many masses of brilliants. The descending and ascending ropes, equal to a stout cable, seemed the finest cobweb; and the huge projecting rocks looked as if every explosion would shake them from their already trembling situation, and crush the labouring wretches below. My little sketch will convey the picture more accurately than my pen.

In one quarter of the mine is a sort of well staircase constructed of wood. It is composed of ladders, steps, and landing places in the rock, at various heights, which gradually communicate with the top; a mode of ascending and descending by far too fatiguing for novices. To those who are fond of mineralogy this mine is doubly interesting, as many curious and beautiful specimens may be procured. Not being of this philosophical class, I remounted with unburthened pockets; and bidding a grateful farewel to our attentive conductor, we returned, well pleased with our morning's researches, to Upsal.

Before we proceeded to Sala, I expressed to the archbishop my wish to visit the Mora Steinar, which I understood was at some little distance from the city. But his grace told me the sight would not now repay me for my trouble. It was originally a collection of stones placed, with a particular arrangement, in the midst of a field; and within the circle of which the kings of Sweden, in the barbarous ages, used to be elected, and receive the homage of their nobility. One only of the stones has any inscription, and that is in Runic characters. By the use to which tradition appropriates the Mora Steinar, we might rather guess that our Stonehenge had been dedicated to similar purposes, than that it was, as some suppose, either a burying place, or a temple of the gods. There, it is probable, on the extensive plain adjoining, the assembled aborigines of this island elected their chief, and within those colossal bulwarks swore fealty to his arms. This rude kind of architecture, though generally spoken of as being peculiar to the northern nations, is not confined to them. I remember (I cannot exactly

tell where, but I think in some old Greek author), reading a description of similar remains in ancient Greece.

The archbishop gave me so miserable an account of the Swedish relics of this kind, informing me that a worse than Goth had removed the Mora Steinar from its native situation, and placed it some where else in what fashion he pleased. Hence, to see its original disposition was impossible, and the visit would have ended in mortification.

Early in the morning of the twenty-fourth we left Upsal, in our usual sledge conveyances; and at a very late hour the same evening arrived at Sala, the city whence the great silver mine derives its name. The road was unvaried, differing little from that to Dunamora, excepting here and there a few masses of granite, similar to those in Finland, broke the level surface.

This little city far exceeds, in neatness and regularity, the more capacious one I have just left. It is twenty-eight English miles from Upsal, and stands very pleasantly towards the west. Its church is large and respectable, having handsome decorations, and a good altarpiece; the subject is the Last Supper; it is well executed, and superbly framed in carved work and gilding. The *place* or square, is extensive and clean, a jewel of the first water in my eyes! The houses are commodious and even elegant; and the whole city wears the air of prosperity and cheerfulness.

The fashions of the natives may vary as I penetrate farther into the interior and less civilized regions; but here, the style of dress for the lower ranks is much the same as that worn by the Welsh peasantry. The women wear a similar coloured handkerchief over their heads, tying it under the chin; also the old Cambrian wollen bedgowns, blue striped petticoat, red stockings, heeled shoes, and large buckles. They cannot boast of beauty. The men, habited like our Welsh boors, are not more graceful figures, being strong and robust, but in features as rugged as their native rocks. However, rough as their outsides may be, they have honest souls. I conversed with many, and a great pleasure it was to me to observe the patriotic spirit which spoke from all their lips. The peasant world seem nerved from the heart against the general enemy. But, where I least

expected it, I find a falling off; and turning from the fields to the city, my gratification is turned to pain, at hearing the alarm of the higher ranks; at seeing their despondency for fear of being left any time to the national resources:—"To England we look," they say, "as our salvation from the surrounding enemies: she must be prompt, or we shall fall like the rest." I am glad that this is not the language of Stockholm, or indeed of the country at large: and a few despairing citizens are lost in the enthusiasm of the mass. However, as all do anticipate the arrival of British auxiliaries, I hope it will not be long before they appear, to support the brave, and rid of their panics the less courageous part of the community.

In the neighbourhood of Sala resides the count de Swerin, a nobleman sprung from one of the best families in Sweden, and one not more respected for his birth, than revered as the best of men. He is a clergyman! A rare instance of a Swedish nobleman assuming the sacerdotal character. Having a letter of introduction, I did myself the honour of calling at his house, but was not so fortunate as to make his acquaintance, he being gone on a visit some miles distant. However, the countess received my friend and myself with graceful hospitality. She is beautiful and accomplished, and showed us her little family, whose lovely health, and sweet manners, were the best proofs of her own excellence, and of the happiness of her husband.

The mine is about half an English mile from the town. It was once, I understand, more valuable than at present; but even now it is an exchequer of wealth to the crown: a kind of huge royal cruse (I would say the *widow's*, were I transported ages back, and writing in the reign of Margaret de Valdemar;) for it has so long been worked, and yet replenishes the kingdom with exhaustless stores. When it was first opened, no tradition can tell; its existence seems primeval with the kingdom.

The machines here employed are more extensive than those of Dunamora, and are all hydraulical. Some are of an immense diameter; the largest, I believe, measures between forty and fifty feet. The aqueduct for conveying away the water is very

ingenious; it is constructed of wood, passing over an extent of more than six English miles.

On our arrival at the mouth of the mine, we entered a low building, and there received the proper habits for making our descent; consisting of a black shirt, a leathern apron closing behind, and a broad brimmed hat, like those of our London coal heavers. We also each carried a bundle of wood to light us through the caverns. I had not seen myself in such a garb since—and what since? you will ask! Why, since I attended a fair *Nell* to a certain royal masquerade in the character of Jobson. And another since, you must remember, when your humble novice in theatrical honours, played serving man to your honour Dick, in our dramatic *apprenticeship* at the right honourable Pic Nic.

Thus properly equipped, my friend and myself, attended by a guide, once more committed ourselves to the protection of a bucket, and immediately were launched into an abyss of upwards of a hundred and fifty fathoms, in a direct line to the bottom. About half way down, a huge cave presented itself, from which issued a long boat hook, (like one of the devil's claws, if you please,) which in a moment drew our vehicle to its mouth. Like the ghosts on the other side of Styx, we jumpt upon firm land, and looked around us. Indeed it was altogether a subterraneous world; a very little imagination would have made it the dominions of Pluto, and transformed my friend and me into two wandering mortals visiting the mansions of *gloomy Dis*, either to regain a father or a wife. Alas! no such interesting objects had we in pursuit! at least, not there did we expect to find them. The cave led us into one of those long galleries excavated in the rock, which traverse the mine in different strata, communicating upwards and downwards by narrow and tremendous shafts, or rather wells, cut in the bowels of the earth, and excluded from the light of day. We explored a great number of these vaulted apartments, which led us into subterranean plains, washed by rivers that had never known the sun's rays; and now lay, not only congealed, but glittering with ten thousand brilliant pyramids, shaped by

their formerly dashing waters, frozen to crystal, and reflecting every beam from our numerous torches.

The long, lonely passages leading to the exhausted and neglected spots of the mine, were damp, perhaps pestilential; and the hardened masses of accumulated droppings, hung in icy columns from the arched roof. It reminded me, dear H—, of the manner the world too generally treats a true friend: when he has spent his strength in our service, when we imagine all is wasted, (wasted, indeed, on the ungrateful!) we leave him to languish in solitary desolation.

Having crossed several of these petrifying dungeons, we approached the inhabited part of the mine, where the *pickax and the spade* were still rewarded by the sparkling ore. Here we descried, at a considerable distance through the gloom, a large cell lit by a solitary lamp, which casting its beams downward, discovered two beings black as Erebus, sitting silent over their meal, with an air more befitting infernal residents (*vampires* if you please,) than creatures connected with human nature.

In these excavations, illumined like a sepulchre, the workmen assemble at midday to take their dinner and temporary rest. We passed by the entrance of one of them when the miners had met. Many of the industrious individuals were lying in various picturesque attitudes on wooden benches, and the projections of the rock; from the higher masses of which hung ragged pieces of canvass, savagely supported by torn branches of pine, meant as signals where to find the banqueting chamber of these sons of Odin; and also to divide their retreat from the vulgar passage of the subterranean world. In the centre of this banditti-like scene, a fire blazed, which casting its lurid lights on the surrounding groups of men, their strange vestments, tools for working, and besides all, a couple of horses asleep in the corner, formed a picture of savage wildness, only to be described by the author of Gil Blas, or sketched by our own admirable Mortimer.

"What a dismal region is this!" exclaimed I to my friend.

"You have yet to go deeper, Sir," said our conductor; "this is only half way to the grand gallery."

Expecting now to pay a visit to the antipodes, we stepped a second time into our bucket, and as swiftly (though less *poetically!*) as the knight of La Mancha and his wooden horse were carried beyond the Pleiades, we were lowered to the bottom of a gulf that really seemed opening to receive us for ever. All here was on a larger scale than above: more people were at work, and a greater number of horses at the wheels to draw off the water which in various channels burst from hidden springs, and flowed in torrents across avenues just excavated by the blasting gunpowder.

Being led into a stony apartment, something like the aisle of a church, our guide desired us to write our names in a book kept on purpose, as a register of all who visit the mines. On turning over the leaves for many a year back, we saw several signatures of our countrymen; and some sufficiently respected to give an additional charm to the places consecrated by their footsteps.

Having walked ourselves weary, we desired to return; and again entering our flying bucket, cut through the air in our ascent. On looking up, the view was equally striking with that I saw on turning my eyes downwards. The mouth of the shaft (which at the top is a circle of very considerable diameter,) appeared reduced to the size of the moon; and did not seem unlike herself shining through a black sky, and silvering the rough cliffs with her meridian glory. On looking into the mine in our journey upward, the light struck partially only on the rocks which gradually receded into darkness; and the red fires of the workmen below, throwing the blackness of the deep caverns of the lower mine into the very hues of Erebus, gave such a horror to the scene, so impressed us when we looked upwards to the clear azure, with the idea of heaven above; and when we looked downwards, with that of hell beneath, that I only wondered how we could have borne so long a sojourn in the regions of the damned. Then, my friend, when these pleasant images crossed our imaginations, think how delectable it was to be hanging suspended by a single ligature between life and an apparently bottomless pit! I assure you, in sober seriousness, it made me shudder to reflect that the smallest accident happen-

ing to the cord or the bucket, would at once hurl us down a chasm of eighty fathoms, where the points of a thousand projecting rocks must meet our fall, and finish our career, long before the yawning waves in the nethermost pitch, would receive our mangled bodies!

We were told that at present the average profits of the mine are four thousand pounds annually. This, as well as those at Dunamora and Fahlun, pay an eighth of the produce to the king, who has the right to appoint the directing officers over the different works. Having paid a couple of dollars for the use of our robes, we left this Swedish Potosi, and returned to Sala.

Intending to set forwards to-morrow on our tour, I despatch this letter by a gentleman, who obligingly takes charge of it to Stockholm; whence, I hope, it will soon find its way to England, to assure the little circle there of all "gentle thoughts to themward," from your ever faithful friend.

LETTER XLII.

Mountains of Dalecarlia, March, 1808.

WE left Sala early in the morning, in order to arrive at Fahlun the same evening. By hard travelling we accomplished our purpose; and midnight lodged us at last at a tolerably comfortable inn. The road hither had proved very bad: the further we advanced, the less snow we found, which rendered the footing for the horses exceedingly slippery and dangerous.

Almost the whole of the way from Sala to Hedemora, the first city in the province of Dalecarlia, is flat and uninteresting; but just as if nature marked that district of heroes by her peculiar smiles, on the frontiers of Westmanland, one post before we approach Hedemora, the face of the country becomes more undulating and wooded; and a few miles further, entering a defile between two high hills, we are suddenly introduced to a series of lovely views, varying their beauties by the continued interchange of mountain and valley. Travelling thus through the very heart of them, the eye is attracted at every turning of the road by these majestic heights, clothed with fine trees, and sheltering innumerable happy villages clustering on the margin of the lakes which generally shine at their foot.

The city of Hedemora stands on one of these lofty hills, commanding a view of the surrounding vales, and an immense expanse of water, which extends before it in a hundred directions, forming beautiful islands; and enlivening the landscape by a thousand boats with their light sails, which dance over its surface in the summer season.

Although it was night when we traversed most of these romantic scenes, yet it was one of those in which,

> "Troilus, methinks, mounted the Trojan wall,
> And sighed his soul toward the Grecian tents,
> Where Cressid lay that night!"

The heavens were unclouded, illumined by a splendid moon; and with fifteen or sixteen degrees of cold in the air, not only

every breath we drew was pure and inspiriting; but the clearness of the atmosphere made each surrounding object as brightly conspicuous as at noonday. Such nights can only be seen in northern climes. Thus drinking in the balm of nature at every respiration, and feasting on her beauties at every turning of the eye, we were abruptly informed of our approach to Fahlun by a strong sulphureous and vitriolic vapour. It began when we were within half a Swedish mile from the town; and augmented to such an excess as we drew nearer, that at last we were enveloped in a thick mist. The moon was now obscured by the veil this cruel metallic enemy threw over us; and not only were we deprived of what we wished to see, but were almost stifled by its oppressive exhalations.

Use doth breed a nature in a man: by the next morning we could endure the disagreeable air; and having fortunately been furnished with an introduction to Mr. Gham, the famous chemist and natural philosopher, we presented it, and by his politeness, instant arrangements were made for showing us every object worthy of notice within this ancient and interesting cavern. The hydraulic engines for conveying the water to the different quarters, are more extensive than those we had already seen. The diameter of the largest wheel is forty-four feet. There is another of great magnitude, the one used for raising the ore from the mine to the surface of the earth, which is on an admirable construction. The engineer is a Swede; and we are told that his work is an improvement on a celebrated wheel in Hungary. A collection of regular circles rises from each side, and terminates, making a flat spiral form on both sides. Round all these winds the chain; taking a smaller or larger circumference according to the necessary circle to be made in order to counterbalance the weight, and consequently increased motion of the bucket.

On viewing the external appearance of these hidden treasures, a vast chasm presents itself of a tremendous depth; being that part of the mine that was first opened, and from the ignorance or neglect of the directors in those days, the excavations they made so weakened the foundations of the hill, that the whole fell in, leaving a most chaotic scene of precipitated

rocks, and a gaping gulf like the mouth of a volcano. Great care has since been taken that no similar disaster shall again happen. Plans and sections are drawn of all its galleries, &c. and where the prosecution of the work in the same direction might be dangerous, orders are issued for the miners to stop, and an iron crown is fixed upon the spot, as a prohibition ever to proceed further. The men then explore in a different direction, while every subterraneous excavation is watched with the nicest calculations.

The dresses given to us as the livery of Fahlun, were very gay in comparison with what we had worn in our descent at Sala, being black linen finely ornamented with red and yellow. Equipping ourselves in our new attire, and each provided with his flambeau, we set forth to gain the mouth of the shaft, a company of five, including our guide; and looking more like a set of condemned wretches at an *auto da fé*, than men dressed for an expedition of curiosity. We passed into the great chasm I before described, by a range of wooden steps crossing the rough masses of falling rocks, gravel, and ancient machinery, in a variety of directions. Ere we reached the door of the shaft we descended a height of thirty toises, and then entered a horizontal way, which led us onward a considerable distance, losing the pure air of day, and gradually breathing the oppressive vapour which rolled towards us in volumes from the mouths of a hundred caves leading into the main passage. It was now that I found myself indeed inhaling the atmosphere of Tartarus. The mines which I had thought so hell like, were merely purgatories when compared with this Satanic dwelling. The descent is not incommodious, nor is it so hazardous as the modes of Dunamora and Sala (the buckets here being used for the ore only), it is performed entirely by steps laid in the winding rock; and following the subterraneous declivity, we at last found ourselves brought to the tremendous depths of these Stygian dominions.

The style of our entrance, and the pestilential vapours which environed us with increasing clouds, strongly reminded me of Virgil's admirable description of the journey of Eneas to the infernal regions. Here was the same caverned portico, the

rocky, rough descent, the steaming sulphur, and all the deadly stenches of Avernus. I cannot say that our demoniac robes carried the resemblance either to the habiliments of the hero, or the snowy garments of the inspired maid: we looked more like a group of ghosts from the fiery Phlegethon, come to demand a short respite from our pains. The length of way and excessive heat, added to its suffocating quality, made us think we should pay dear for our curiosity. Once or twice I could hardly support myself; and most wofully did I long for the magic influence of the sibyl's bough, to refresh my parched lungs. It is impossible to describe the Siroc sultriness and oppression which increases at every step: the nearest similitude I can draw (and that only resembles the most temperate part of the mine) is the heat of a Russian vapour bath.

In one part, which I would not enter, the steam being so excessively hot as to scorch us at twelve paces distant, the sulphureous smell became intolerable. Our guide informed us that a volcanic fire broke out near this spot some years ago; in consequence of which they had been obliged to build strong walls as barriers to its power, and to close up several of the passages that, being contiguous, had it spread, would have proved dangerous to the mine.

We traversed many long and winding galleries, as well as large vaulted caverns, where the workmen were scattered on all sides, employed in hewing vast masses of the rock, and preparing other parts for explosion. Some were wheeling the broken ore towards the black abyss, where the suspended buckets hung ready to draw it upwards. From the effects of such strong exercise, with the heat, the labourers were obliged to work almost naked. Their groups, occupations, and primitive appearance, scantily lighted by the trembling rays of our torches, formed a curious and interesting scene.

In ancient days, this mine was a kind of state prison, where criminals, slaves, and prisoners of war, toiled out their wretched existence. Many pathetic narratives are related of the different inhabitants of this subterraneous abode. Sometimes tales of horror; and at others, lamentable circumstances of innocence being made the sacrifice of interest, jealousy, or ambition. One

story, were it not too long for my pen at present, I would recount to you; but as it is beautifully told in *La Philosophie de la Nature*, I refer you to its pages, where you will read a most tender and interesting tale of two lovers, the romantic *dénouement* of whose fate happened in this very mine.

After the perambulation of at least an hour, we reached the bottom, a depth of two hundred toises. The mass of copper ore in the mine lies in the form of an inverted cone: and as the labours of the people have nearly reached its extent, I understand, from the observations of the directors, that they are apprehensive the treasure it produces will soon be exhausted. Five hundred men are the daily workers. Women are forbidden to enter it: no very mortifying prohibition! I suppose the law was meant rather as a kindness than restriction, arising from a fear of their more delicate frames being injured by so destructive an atmosphere. They are allowed free egress to the other mines, which have not these baneful vapours.

To show you how Avernian are the streams in this mine, I need mention one instance only. A few days before we arrived, a man fell into a large hole in one of the caverns. Not a moment was lost in taking him out; but yet the effects of the vitriolic water he had swallowed were so potent, that he died in less than an hour.

Near the bottom of the mine is a rocky saloon, in which are benches; it is called *the Hall of the Senate*, from its having been the resting place of several Swedish kings, who, coming to examine the works, refreshed themselves there; and, as a *memento* of their visit, wrote their names, with their appropriate dates, on the roof. Here too, perhaps, the immortal Gustavus Vasa, when patriotism and he sheltered in this mine, took his nocturnal repose, and in visions of future glory, forgot the afflictions that kept down the noble aspirings of his godlike mind.

After the death of Steno, the administrator and the bosom friend of Gustavus, and the consequent murder of the senate, and a price being set on his own head, the future deliverer of Sweden retired to the mountains of Dalecarlia; hoping he might hide himself in the woods with which that country is covered;

and imagining that it would not be difficult to stimulate the inhabitants to revolt against the tyrant Christiern, as they had always shown themselves averse to the Danish yoke. At that time there was not one good town in the whole province, and hardly any but small villages situated on the borders of forests, or on the banks of lakes and rivers. Some of these villages depended on the noblemen of the country, but most belonged to the crown, and were governed by the peasants themselves; the elders supplying the places of judges and captains. The national government durst not send either troops or garrisons into this province; nor did the kings themselves ever enter it in a regal manner till they had given pledges to the mountaineers, to retain their privileges. On these independent people, therefore, Gustavus placed a firm confidence.

Disguising himself as a peasant, he set forth on his way to Dalecarlia, accompanied by a boor who was to be his guide. He crossed over the whole country of Sudermonia, then passed between Mericia and Westmonia, and after the fatigues of a long and dangerous journey, arrived safe amongst the mountains. He had no sooner entered the province, than he was abandoned by his guide, who absconded, robbing him of all the money he had provided for his subsistence. He wandered up and down amongst these dreadful deserts, destitute of friends and money, not daring to own that he was even a gentleman. At length the inhabitants, then hardly more civilized than savages, proposed to him to work for his livelihood. To conceal himself from discovery, and to support nature, he accordingly hired himself to labour in this very mine; and for a long course of time did he toil in these caverns, and breathe as his common aliment the air, one respiration of which seemed to bring me the summons of death. But I shall speak further of him by and by.

This mine is said to produce the best copper in Europe; and is useful, not only on account of its internal wealth, but in providing subsistence for so many subjects as work in its bosom. The three great mines of the kingdom employ annually, in constant pay, about twenty-five thousand six hundred persons.

Fahlun is most delightfully situated (were it not for its

noxious vapours), amidst rocks and hills, and between the arms of a magnificent lake. The town is not very large, containing about fifteen hundred houses; and two churches, one more modern than the other; the roofs of both are covered with copper, which the atmosphere has turned a bright green. The surrounding forges, and other works carried on by fire, most frightfully besoot the houses, and give a dirty appearance to the whole. The inhabitants think to mend the matter by besmearing the walls with a red sort of paint; but as you "cannot wash the blackamoor white," neither can they make their abodes, at the best, look better than a chimney sweeper daubed and dressed out for Mayday. The sons of the miners, until they attain a proper age to be sent under ground, are employed in making nails; some of which are so small as to be used in fastening the models for the larger machinery. Not being anxious that they shall drive any into my coffin, I leave this black pandæmonium to-morrow; promising that the next epistle *Castor* has from *Pollux* shall not be from the dominions of Proserpine. Adieu.

LETTER XLIII.

Mountains of Dalecarlia, April, 1808.

We left Fahlun on Wednesday the thirtieth of last month. When mounted on the first height that rises from the town, we looked back; the view that presented itself was gloomily picturesque; the plain and lake, and the hill on which the city stands, rising out of the mist; the spires of the churches, and the long assemblage of dark buildings, half concealed by the volumes of sulphureous smoke rolling in turbulent masses over their heads; the adjacent and distant mountains, wooded to their summits with the tree spontaneous to the country, whose spiral form seems to contemn the wintry snows; all expressed so severe a beauty, that while I admired, I wrapped myself round in my pelisse, and gave our steeds two or three impulses extraordinary to draw us to the upper world. They appeared as willing as their masters to leave the Stygian shores; and flying along the continued chain of precipitous mountains, brought us to the edge of a lake, bounded on one side by a rising ground; and on the other, as far as our eye could reach, by innumerable luxuriant islands.

On the little hill just mentioned, stood a very ancient habitation; of so simple an architecture, that you would have taken it for a hind's cottage, instead of a place that, in times of old, had been the abode of nobility. It consisted of a long barnlike structure, formed of fir, covered in a strange fashion with scales, and odd ornamental twistings in the carved wood. But the spot was hallowed by the virtue of its heroic mistress, who saved, by her presence of mind, the life of the future deliverer of her country. The following are the circumstances alluded to; and most of them were communicated to me under the very roof.

Gustavus, having, by an evil accident, been discovered in the mines, and after being narrowly betrayed by a Swedish nobleman, bent his course towards this house, then inhabited by a gentleman of the name of Pearson (or Peterson), whom

he had known in the armies of the late administrator. Here, he hoped, from the obligations he had formerly laid on the officer, that he should at least find a safe retreat. Pearson received him with every mark of friendship; nay, treated him with that respect and submission which noble minds are proud to pay to the truly great, when robbed of their external honours. He seemed more afflicted by the misfortunes of Gustavus, than that prince was for himself; and exclaimed with such vehemence against the Danes, that, instead of awaiting a proposal to take up arms, he offered, unasked, to try the spirit of the mountaineers; and declared that himself and his vassals would be the first to set an example, and turn out under the command of his beloved general.

Gustavus was rejoiced to find that he had at last found a man who was not afraid to draw his sword in the defence of his country; and endeavoured by the most impressive arguments, and the prospect of a suitable recompense for the personal risks he ran, to confirm him in so generous a resolution. Pearson answered with repeated assurances of fidelity: he named the gentlemen and the leading persons among the peasants whom he hoped to engage in the enterprise. Gustavus relied on his word, and promising not to name himself to any while he was absent, some days afterwards saw him leave the house to put his design in execution.

It was indeed a design, and a black one. Under the specious cloak of a zealous affection for Gustavus, the traitor was contriving his ruin. The hope of making his court to the Danish tyrant, and the expectation of a large reward, made this son of Judas resolve to sacrifice his honour to his ambition, and, for the sake of a few ducats, violate the most sacred laws of hospitality, by betraying his guest. In pursuance of that base resolution he went straight to one of Christiern's officers commanding in the province, and informed him that Gustavus was his prisoner. Having committed this treachery, he had not courage to face his victim; and telling the Dane how to surprise the prince, who, he said, believed himself to be under the protection of a friend, (shame to manhood, to dare to confess that he could betray such a confidence!) he proposed taking a

wider circuit home, while they, apparently unknown to him, rifled it of its treasure. "It will be an easy matter," said he, "for not even my wife knows that it is Gustavus."

Accordingly the officer, at the head of a party of well armed soldiers, marched directly to the lake. The men invested the house, while the leader, abruptly entering, found Pearson's wife, according to the fashion of those days, employed in culinary preparations. At some distance from her sat a young man in a rustic garb, lopping off the knots from the broken branch of a tree. The officer went up to her, and told her he came in king Christiern's name to demand the rebel Gustavus, who he knew was concealed under her roof. The dauntless woman never changed colour; she immediately guessed the man whom her husband had introduced as a miner's son, to be the Swedish hero. The door was blocked up by soldiers. In an instant she replied, without once glancing at Gustavus, who sat motionless with surprise, "If you mean the melancholy gentleman my husband has had here these few days, he has just walked out into the wood on the other side of the hill. Some of those soldiers may readily seize him, as he has no arms with him."

The officer did not suspect the easy simplicity of her manner; and ordered part of the men to go in quest of him. At that moment, suddenly turning her eyes on Gustavus, she flew up to him, and catching the stick out of his hand, exclaimed, in an angry voice: "Unmannerly wretch! What, sit before your betters? Don't you see the king's officers in the room? Get out of my sight, or some of them shall give you a drubbing!" As she spoke, she struck him a blow on the back with all her strength; and opening a side door, "there get into the scullery," cried she, "it 's the fittest place for such company!" and giving him another knock, she flung the stick after him, and shut the door. "Sure," added she, in a great heat, "never woman was plagued with such a lout of a slave!"

The officer begged she would not disturb herself on his account: but she, affecting great reverence for the king, and respect for his representative, prayed him to enter her parlour while she brought some refreshment. The Dane civilly com-

plied; perhaps, glad enough to get from the side of a shrew; and she immediately hastened to Gustavus, whom she had bolted in, and, by means of a back passage, conducted him in a moment to a *certain little apartment*, which projecting from the side of the house close to the bank of the lake where the fishers' boats lay, she lowered him down the convenient aperture in the seat, and giving him a direction to an honest curate across the lake, committed him to Providence.*

While he made his way to a boat, unmoored it, and rowed swiftly towards the isles, so hiding himself and his course amongst their mazes; the lady returned to the Dane laden with provisions, and amused him by a well spread table till the soldiers brought back the disappointing intelligence, that their search had been fruitless. The observations of the officer, and his new directions, soon apprized the heroic woman of the vileness of her husband; and therefore, when he appeared, which was shortly afterwards, even to him she kept true to her first statement, that Gustavus had gone out into the wood.

The circumstance of the chastised servant seemed so insignificant to the officer, that, as it had occasioned in him no suspicion, he never mentioned it. And as guilt easily believes itself suspected, Pearson acknowledged with vexation to the Dane, that he had no doubt Gustavus had suspected his design, being aware, notwithstanding their mutual friendship, of his impregnable fidelity to Christiern (*measureless liar!*); and had accordingly taken the opportunity of his absence, to escape. As none were in the lady's confidence, the new retreat of Gustavus remained undiscovered, till, assisted by the good curate, and other friends to liberty, he appeared openly at the head of the brave Dalecarlians, and gave his country freedom.

So strongly was I impressed with the history of this great prince, even more invincible in mind than in arms, that I looked on the house which had once sheltered him, and in which female nobleness had also shone so conspicuously, with a kind of

* Though this adventure resembles that of our great Alfred with the neatherd's wife, no doubts need be entertained of its authenticity; I had it from the first authority; and can only admire, how nearly similar were the histories of these two justly famous men!—R. K. P. 1808.

holy veneration. We entered this interesting place attended by an old woman, who lives in an adjoining house for the purpose of showing strangers this relic of antiquity. The room in which Gustavus slept, with his very bed, is most sacredly preserved. The hero's couch is a huge unwieldly square frame of common fir, with a straw mattress: he had no softer pillow. The present proprietor, a descendant from the fair patriot, guards these remains as he would his life; and he is daily adding to them others which formerly belonged to the heroic monarch. One testimony of his respect I do not so much approve: he has put sumptuous hangings on the bed, surmounted by a diadem; and a covering of silk over the rustic couch, embroidered with Swedish crowns. All this may be a demonstration of loyalty, but is the very reverse of good taste; as it breaks in upon the sentiment with which we enter the cottage, and almost destroys the peculiar enthusiasm which the ancient simplicity of his chamber and bed would have increased to a pitch of the purest delight. It is then we view him, without any adventitious ornaments, as the greatest of men: in a peasant's garb, on a peasant's couch (his royalty being proclaimed by his actions alone), he is worthy to be the king of a brave and virtuous people. The gilded crown and embroidered velvet are common to any sovereign: and the sight of those decorations in such a place, confuses the hero with the trappings of state, and the picture being indistinct, our reflections take the same vague complexion.

In addition to these regal draperies, the present owner has brought together other relics; particularly a suit of armour, surmounted with a sculptured head, &c. which completes a figure in commemoration of Gustavus. Whether the harness was the king's, is a matter of doubt with me, as it bears marks of rather a more modern construction. Some of the most curious objects in the room, are the effigies of two Dalecarlian peasants, who were the faithful friends and attendants of his majesty. Nothing can be more characteristic, better executed, or convey a more accurate idea of what these people were in the century so famous for the exploits of Gustavus. They are clothed in white woollen habits, with highcrowned hats; are armed with crossbows, and all the necessary appendages to

such weapons hang from a leathern belt, worn over the shoulders. The quiver is slung to their side, filled with arrows, which are short, and made of fir, even including the feather; their points were iron, mostly spikes; others, of a more ornamented sort, and better finished, were barbed. A portrait of the heroine who saved the king, hangs up in the room. From this interesting personage, I am told, is lineally descended the lady who was the nurse of the present brave monarch. There are also several copies from originals of two or three of the succeeding sovereigns. On the same floor which contains this apartment, is the closet whence Gustavus escaped. I inclose a drawing of the house, where you will find this latter little chamber in the projection, supported by two erect beams. Between these he was lowered; and issuing forth, easily reached the boat which carried him far from his enemies.

Bidding adieu to this hallowed spot, we proceeded along the romantic banks of the river Dahl, and through the defiles of the heights towards the city of Saltier. The road is exquisitely beautiful; being a continued chain of mountain scenery, varied by luxuriant valleys, savage ravines, and wildly rolling waters dashing from steep to steep with the noise of thunder. The cataracts close to Saltier are fine, though not equal in sublimity to some that I have seen. About half an English mile further, we came upon the brow of an iron mine; but having no inclinations for any more inearthings, we preferred the light of day, and the enjoyment of an extensive and glorious prospect from the summit of the mountain. We then proceeded on the same enchanting road, winding through such diversity of picturesque scenery, that I was in a state of ejaculation almost the whole way.

We entered a thick forest, and travelled under its gigantic arms for many miles. The scene was so solitary, the forms and hues of the trees so monotonous and black, that as the wind moaned amongst their branches, I could not but think of the Erl king, and expect at every spot of deeper gloom, to see his terrific majesty rise before us. We at last caught a glimpse of distant water; and soon after, the forest extending its arms into a wider opening, discovered to us the expansive lake, on the

margin of which stands the pretty city of Hedemora. Having explored it on our journey to the mountains, we now passed directly through, and proceeded to Affestaforce, where the copper from Fahlun is smelted and prepared for exportation. The furnaces are extensive. All the other engines for rendering the ore useful, are worked by the waters of the Affestaforce. Here, the small copper coin of Sweden is cut and stampt.

The village is built on the verge of a rapid stream, which rises from a lake at some little distance. The rude hand of nature hath cast this place in her most barbarous mould. Huge masses of rock are cast into the middle of the flood in a thousand shattered forms; and over these the waters rush from immense heights, with a rapidity and violence that seem to threaten the destruction of even such colossal obstructions. The roaring of their fall is beyond description; in strength and savage grandeur far exceeding the cataracts of Saltier. Well may it be called the Force; for nothing appears capable of resisting its impetuosity. If I recollect right, we have this very appellation for rapid streams in North Britain. But to proceed with my landscape. This watery magnificence is harmoniously grouped with the surrounding scenery of stupendous mountains covered with firs, precipitous rocks shelving over the flood, and the romantic dwellings of the natives animating the less dangerous banks of the stream. We entered several cottages, and found much to amuse and interest our curiosity.

The peasantry in this province are robust and rough in their exterior. The white and black Dalecarlians, as they are called, differ not in complexion, but in the colour of their dresses; one being black woollen cloth, and the other white. The coat is wide in the sleeves, and closed straight down the breast with hooks and eyes, having nothing like a button; it reaches below the knees. Their stockings are gray with red clocks, and garters. Huge shoes, with thick wooden soles, and tied with an oldfashioned leathern flap falling over their insteps. They all wear a low crowned hat, with a white cord two or three times wrapped about it; the brim is broad, like a Quaker's. The women coif themselves in a little white cap close to their head and face. White woollen bedgowns; petticoats of brown or

blue flannel neatly striped with various colours; a blue apron with red lines running round it; a pair of bright red stockings, with clumsy shoes, whose heels come under the centre of the foot, completes their attire. The white peasantry, both male and female, have their cuffs of a dark blue. The black usually have returns of red.

The food of this hardy race generally consists of salt herrings, and wheaten cakes, hard as iron; hundreds of which are hung from the ceiling of each cottage, with a stick perforating the middle. Bacon is a great treat; or, indeed, any sort of meat, as that branch of provisions rarely regales their appetites. They drink vast quantities of a very small and sour beer; but a meal is never finished without two or three glasses of their brandy, much worse in flavour, and more fiery, than the vilest whiskey I ever tasted. They pour it over their fish by way of sauce; and some of the women give it to infants at the breast, as well as to others at a walkable age, who drink a draught of it without a wry face, so accustomed are their little stomachs to the glowing beverage.

The cottages are in general very clean, as the *delicate* part of the family are most actively industrious. One hall, with a large hearth, is the plan of their habitations: this is comfortably appointed with tables and forms for the service of themselves and friends. The beds are in the wainscot, one over the other, like those in the cabin of a ship. Here the whole family sleep; and with as much modesty, I am told, as if each had separate apartments. The stock of eatables being dried fish and cakes, are part of the pendent ornaments of the room, with the addition of an old rifle; a great chest (containing the household wardrobe, &c.) under a sort of range full of plates, and perhaps a clock, complete the furniture. In Dalecarlia, as well as near Stockholm, oxen are used in husbandry; they are harnessed like horses; and, in all the services to which they are put, perform their duty with equal effect.

Leaving these celebrated mountains; celebrated, not so much for their noble scenery, as for their nobler inhabitants, we turned our course for Stockholm, and passed through Sala to Westerahs, a city on the direct road. In our way thither we

drove through many woods; being the close of evening, several wolves issued from the thickets, but without an alarming appearance; they merely crossed the heads of our horses, eyed them anxiously, halted at a short distance, and on the smallest noise set off into the forest.

The Westerahs, like most cities in Sweden, is situated upon the edge of water. They have generally a lake or a river as their nearest neighbour; and this town, considered the capital of Westmanland, is built on the northern bank of the Malar. It is the see of a bishop, and the residence of a governor. It boasts a castle, though not a very magnificent one; but its cathedral far exceeds, in preservation and grandeur, that of Upsal. Its interior is very beautiful, and possesses several flat monuments of its ancient clergy, as well as an altar, and two or three other specimens of papistical decoration, so admirably hewn and carved, as would do honour to Albert Durer. The subject of the altarpiece is the life and death of our Saviour, arranged in Gothic compartments, painted and gilded with the most curious accuracy. The beauty of the design, and the colours are in such preservation, that I consider the work as the most perfect thing of the kind extant.

We were next shown the monument of the unfortunate Eric XIV., erected by the late king. It is of Italian design and workmanship; and as worthy of the monarch as of the artist. The whole consist of a sarcophagus surmounted by a crown and other symbols of royalty, having a bronze vase on the side. On the pedestal is the following inscription:

Eric XIV.
Regi Svev. Goth. Vand.
Augusto.
Nato MDXXXIII.
Bellis terrâ marique gestis claro
Dissidiis domesticis succumbenti
Sceptro libertate eundem vitâ spoliato
A MDLXXVII.
Hic
Indulgente demum fratre
Pax concessa est.
Gustavus III.
Hoc monumentum ponit.

The liberality, genius, and greatness of mind of the late sovereign of this country, are apparent wherever you turn: in almost every city of the kingdom you meet testimonies of words like these, bearing witness to all ages, how magnificent, how noble was Gustavus the Third!

The cathedral of Westerahs was begun and completed in the twelfth century; and owed its origin, I believe, to St. Eric, being finished by his successor, Charles the Seventh. It possesses a small but valuable library, containing several manuscripts in high estimation, which were brought, from Mayence in the year 1635.

We next visited the square, to see a large ill fashioned building destined for the residence of the governor, in which, we were told, the unhappy Eric XIV. was confined. At present, it neither resembles a palace nor a prison; but is called the castle; and, as I said before, is a most hideous looking structure. Nothing more attractive presenting itself, we entered our vehicle, and set forwards on our journey.

As we shot along, we passed through several villages charmingly situated, and halted at the hospitable mansion of Mr. D——s. Once, it was a palace of Gustavus III. a circumstance that rendered it doubly interesting to me. I walked in its park, and was shown many runic stones that were exceedingly curious. As I purpose visiting our kind friend again, I shall then make drawings of them for the benefit of my antiquarian acquaintance. I know not whether you will find much entertainment in such antiques; but none can be more valuable in both our eyes than an old friend! I therefore shall bring you myself, if I do not send them, very shortly: intending only a very brief stay at Stockholm; then, perhaps, a sweep over the frontiers of Norway; and then, happy sight! the cliffs of England will greet the eyes of your affectionate friend.

LETTER XLIV.

Stockholm, April, 1808.

ON my returning to Stockholm, (having in my absence seen so many admirable inanimate objects,) I was determined to lose no time in gaining an admission to a living one that was yet more worthy of admiration,—the wonderful Sergal. This was an achievement more difficult than climbing the heights of Dalecarlia.

This extraordinary man, whose works equal some of the finest of Greece, is labouring under a severe nervous illness which has affected him for many years; not only depriving the world of the creations of his divine genius, but also bereaving his friends of the happiness his conversation afforded. His talents were not so absorbed in his art as to leave him without those social graces, which endear even more than they embellish. I am told that in the days of his health, his company was sought by all ranks as their greatest prize. His mind was generally informed, full of classical knowledge, fine taste, and the most engaging cheerfulness. All these endowments, finished by an exquisite gracefulness of manners, so recommended him to Gustavus III., that he not only possessed that monarch's patronage, but his confidential friendship. The death of that amiable sovereign so affected Mr. Sergal, that his former vivacity gave way to a growing pensiveness, with frequent bursts of sorrow; and some years ago he fell into an illness which has left his nerves in the most shattered state. Indeed, so sad is his condition, that he now shuts himself up from the world, hardly allowing, except on very rare occasions, even his oldest friend to approach him.

However, one of them, at my solicitation, ventured to mention to him my earnest wish to have the honour of personally knowing him. To the astonishment of all he consented to receive me. I was immediately taken to him, and presented by his friend. The venerable man welcomed me with a gentle kindness that penetrated the heart. He spoke as if he was pleased with the

sentiment that brought me to him, and talked with great affability of myself and my country. He appears to be about seventy, with a fine and expressive countenance. The account I had heard of his indisposition and its primary causes (for he had more than one), made me look on him with additional interest and tenfold regret. Respecting the amiableness of the disposition which could have rendered his frame so susceptible, and reflecting on the loss the world sustained by his paralized powers, I was more moved than I could possibly conceal.

The gentleman who had presented me, in a few minutes made a signal for our departure. When I rose to withdraw, Mr. Sergal desired that I might be conducted to his study, and lamented that his being an invalid prevented his attending me thither himself. I bade him adieu, pleased with my interview, but impressed with saddening thoughts at the melancholy decline of such a man.

It is always gratifying to see celebrated persons; and when worthy of the fame they receive, the pleasure is converted to a happiness. I have ever sought them at home and abroad with assiduity; and during my several journeyings to and fro on the earth, have been personally introduced to not a few characters whose names will live in the page of fame for ever. It was this reverence of the truly great, that led me to the side of the divine Klopstock, just a month or two before he died. Though a patriarch in years and literary glory, his mind seemed to flourish in immortal youth; and when his silver hairs and feeble step declared that his mortal glass was nearly run, the brightness of his eye, and the animation of his conversation, promised a life, lengthened for many years. He looked, as he discoursed, like the poet of the Messiah. I never can forget the interview.

He, to his latest hour, was blest with unvarying, though tender health. It was not of a robust constitution, but mild and clear like his own genius. Similar was his mind; and when I saw him, it seemed to shine forth, like an angelic spirit in a human form, "sent on a heavenly embassy to man." Happy, therefore, was his lot! But, the no less admirable Sergal! I saw him suffering under a grievous malady; and the remem-

brances I brought away were full of commiseration and painful regrets.

As he had been the chosen companion of Gustavus III. (having accompanied that prince to Italy, where he assisted him to make the royal collection of antiques now in the palace), the present king, on the opening of the statue of his illustrious father, added to the honours with which he had already distinguished Sergal, that of ennobling his family.

On leaving the venerable invalid, we descended into the Attilur. I looked around, and beheld innumerable busts, several of which were of the nobility; but what particularly attracted my attention was, one of Gustavus III., and another of his magnanimous son, the present king, partnered with one of his queen. These three were of marble, and exquisitely finished by the chisel of Sergal. To the heads of the two sovereigns he had given soul and energy, as well as all the softness of nature. The head of her majesty possesses her sweet expression, and the enchanting smile which bespeaks the heavenly goodness of her heart.

We next turned to a Venus in a bending posture, pressing her left hand gracefully on her bosom, from which falls a piece of drapery more like an aërial veil; in short, the whole statue rather resembles a poetic phantom, than a mass of solid marble. This supernatural beauty, this breathing life, are the excellencies of Sergal, which bring him so closely on a level with the best Greek artists. The production in question has been completed fifteen years.

Another fine specimen of the talents of this great master, is a group of Venus being wounded by Diomede. It is in every part replete with knowledge, taste, and fine composition. But I hasten with impatience to point out to you what I consider as his *chef-d'œuvre:* a work which alone would have given him immortal fame. Cupid and Psyche! O, that you had been with me to partake the luxury of viewing such perfection! so strongly did I think of the pleasure you would have enjoyed, that I even looked round at the instant, as if I expected to say to you —"How beautiful it is!"

The time the artist has chosen, is the moment after Psyche

has attempted to murder Cupid. She is on one knee, looking up to the offended god, and intreating his pardon. The expression of her countenance is so much the type of a mind overwhelmed with grief and remorse, hopeless of forgiveness yet earnestly imploring it, that it is impossible to behold her without bursts of admiration. Her form is perfect; its beauty, its delicacy, its matchless eloquence in all female tenderness and sorrow, are beyond my pen to describe. But should the group be hereafter placed where it can be publicly seen and appreciated, I will venture to predict that no work, modern or ancient, will preserve a higher fame. The fine and godlike anger, as well as imperious feelings of insulted love, are gloriously expressed in the face of Cupid. He is in the act of tearing himself from Psyche, who endeavours to detain him. The two figures are exquisitely united by drapery. The form of Cupid is not inferior in beauty to that of his weeping love; and the lightness and divine contour of the whole, declare them to be indeed of immortal race. The dagger and lamp at his feet are the sad proofs of Psyche's guilt.

Several smaller works of Mr. Sergal's are around the study. As I withdrew, an admirable model in terra-cota, of a drunken fawn, struck my attention. In quitting this interesting subject, I must do Mr. Sergal the justice to say, that although I have had the good fortune to see much genius in some modern sculptors, yet I know no country in Europe that possesses an artist who, like him, unites all the beauty of the antique with the ease of nature. Our own great master in the art is rather too devoted to the Grecian lines: would he sometimes give the reins to his fine imagination, he would see nature, and we should see perfection. I have met with men, during my former travels, of extraordinary talent in sculpture; but it was Mr. Sergal who showed me that the best statues of Greece can be equalled. The generality of modern sculptors have a *maniere* in their works, decisively declaring their close imitation of the antique, (which they often carry to an iron excess,) or, when they neglect that study, set forth a mean copy of common nature, totally contradicting every principle of the art. An artist, both in painting and in sculpture, should but refer to nature

and to the antique, as an orator would to his notes. The body of his work must proceed from his own genius.

The day after my visit to the Swedish Praxiteles, I paid my respects at the palace of Stockholm, where I was duly introduced to its marble gods and heroes. In my way thither I noticed the bronze statue of Gustavus Adolphus: it is on horseback, but so badly executed, that I did not give it a second look. Not so the figure of Gustavus Vasa, which stands opposite the *Hall of the Knights*: it is worthy of its situation, and of the brave prince which it commemorates. You, who are no cold admirer of deeds of chivalry, will not object to taking a peep, as we pass, into this hall! It is here the diets of the kingdom assemble when they sit at Stockholm; and here all great solemnities of the nobility are held. The size of the place is immense: the walls are covered with the coats of arms of all the Swedish nobles, which are so numerous, that even the staircases and porticos blaze with armorial bearings.

But to the palace! It was built by Charles XII., from the design of Monsieur le Comte de Tessin; and it is in every respect deserving the honour of having been founded by so renowned a sovereign. I have already given you a description of the august possessors of this magnificent dwelling: and as you are no Buckingham, to barter time or patience for all *Hereford's movables*, I will not burthen you either with catalogues of velvet hangings, gigantic mirrors, embroidered canopies, antique couches, chairs, and tables; leaving these convenient pieces of furniture to their silent uses, I shall call your attention to what perhaps ornamented the apartments of Pericles, or gave redoubled attraction to the chamber of Augustus. I mean the gallery of ancient statues, which were chosen by Sergal at Rome, and brought hither by Gustavus III.

In the first saloon to which I was conducted, two very fine candelabra present themselves, of the most spotless marble I ever saw. They are not less than eight feet high, with a wonderful lightness and elegance of form. Between them stands a draped figure; a priestess, holding in her right hand a cup for libations or for incense. The taste of the figure is delightful: its majestic and simple vestments, sufficiently declare its origin

from the chisel of the best Greeks. Here are no perpendicular lines, no stiffnesses; nothing to remind of art, but all to tell of beautiful, easy nature.

On the left is a Minerva. This is the first in a range of antiques, which are placed with true heraldic precedence along this side of the chamber. She bears in her mien the goddess of wisdom, the counsellor of Ulysses, and the guide of his son. Next her stands Euterpe, with a flute in each hand. Then Melpomene, holding a large mask in her right hand, and in her left a dagger, which she rests upon her left knee, her foot being raised upon a mass of rock. (There is a copy from this, as well as from most of the others, now in the *Louvre* at Paris.) The head is crowned with ivy or vine leaves, and possesses a wonderfully powerful tragic character. Setting aside the ungraceful attitude of the lower extremities, all else of the figure is in such pure taste, that you cannot regret its having received the sanction of Sergal's judgment. Clio is next, holding a scroll; and then Polyhymnia. Next to them stands the well known Apollo, striking his lyre, and stepping forward at the same moment. The head is beautiful, and fraught with all the harmony of expression, and elevated sentiment, so conspicuous in that deity whenever he is accompanied by the muses. He is clothed in long drapery; and by many, at the first glance, has been mistaken for a female; but a moment's observation, and the god is perfectly discerned. I thought it would be a most excellent study for any artist who wished to paint Achilles in his disguise at the court of Lycomedes. How well might it be grouped with the listening Deidamia, regarding with rapture the godlike majesty of her lover's action, and the noble grace with which he holds the instrument to his breast, making it *discourse most eloquent music!* The animation that pervades the whole statue is so wonderful, you forget the marble on gazing on it, and momently expect to hear the heavenly tones of the lyre.

Thalia follows, beautifully simple, with her usual attribute, the comic mask. Urania, with her appropriate emblems. And then Erato! I cannot find words to describe the grace and insinuating power of this statue. Fix your eyes on it, and to withdraw them is almost impossible, such a fascination imper-

ceptibly grows over you; a softness, a delight, seems to pass from the lovely image to your heart, that rivets you, spell-bound, to the spot. The lightness and delicate *contour* is perfect in every part. She was in all but the look of grief, the sister of my first love, the divine Psyche. The position is bending forward, in the act of encircling herself with her robe: a beautiful emblem of the modesty of the passion she protects. Her sylphid form, with the graceful lines of her drapery, and the animated, as well as soft air of the countenance, produces a *toute ensemble* so penetratingly lovely, that—a man feels himself almost a fool while looking at her. A gentleman of admirable taste, who led me through these classic chambers, on placing me before this invaluable production, exclaimed, *Voilà mon amour!* In good sooth, had I been the artist whose glowing imagination formed this figure, and could I have yielded my heart to beauty alone, I must have shared Pygmalion's passion with a much harder fate.

Terpsichore is the next in rotation, holding her lyre. The statue possesses great merit; but it is so eclipsed by the preceding one, that you hardly pause before it a moment: besides, one arm, and from below the knees, has been restored. The part covered by the ancient drapery, is in the accustomed good taste of Greece. Close to her, and last on this side the gallery, sits Calliope, with tablets and a stylus in her hands. The drapery is very inferior to the others; indeed, I must confess, that I saw nothing in the whole statue to excite my admiration.

The *chef d'œuvre* of the whole collection is an Endymion. He is reclining on his back, in all the calm repose of careless slumber. It is impossible to sufficiently praise the transcendent beauties of this figure. The perfections of the form are not inferior to the most celebrated statues; and the muscles of the body are expressed with so much nature, tranquillity, and truth, that it is with difficulty you can persuade yourself that the sleeping shepherd does not breathe. The expression of the head carries on the illusion; and its beauty, as well as the exquisite symmetry of the figure, form a most excellent and fair apology for the condescension of the *chaste* goddess. The

grace displayed in the disposal of the attitude, is in harmony with the exquisite loveliness of the youth; and I am happy to say, that the destructive power of ages, has spared this transcendent specimen of past talents. In size, it does not fall short of the colossal magnitude of the Apollo Belvidere; and by the embraces of Diana, seems to have imbibed a part of her divinity.

When I look at works like these, I am filled with a wondering admiration of the sculptors of old. I behold the power of mind almost supernatural before me, in the representation of gods and of heroes; not distinguished merely by attributes or name, but so marked by the genius of the artist with the signs of divinity, or of mortal heroism, that it is impossible to mistake his meaning. The Apollo, the Venus, and the Endymion, ought always to be ranked as the first remains of Grecian talents. Several large and magnificent marble vases finish the antique ornaments of the gallery.

In an adjoining saloon, is a numerous collection of busts, some in marble, others in bronze, of the Roman emperors, and the eminent men of the republic. Innumerable altars, sarcophagi, small pillars, basso relievos, and mutilated columns, fill the apartment; giving it the appearance of an Herculaneum above ground. There are four columns, about fourteen feet in length, of highly polished gray and variegated marble, that were brought from the ancient city of Pompeia: their capitals are of white porcelain, and of the Doric order.

In a small room to the right, is a large assortment of Etruscan vases, antique enamelled dishes, several curious lamps, &c.; all the produce of the two overwhelmed Italian cities. This closes the royal store of ancient art.

Within the walls of the palace, not one good picture is to be found: but a great many bad originals, and worse copies. I found in one of the galleries several young men, studying these daubs, with all the attention of students in the best schools of Italy. From these examples, I cannot be surprised at the state of painting here. The public exhibition took place a few days ago. Of course I went thither, and saw as the best what the academicians in England would have rejected with disgrace.

Neither traces of fading genius, nor of growing talent, were visible in any but one. I found that one was the work of a very young man; and should he meet with adequate encouragement, he may in time become the father of his art in the kingdom.

This exhibition of Swedish genius is open for several weeks, two days in each being free to the public. On others, a few schillings procures the admission; on which times, the *beau monde* make it their daily resort. The academy which belongs to this institution is at the expense of government: and had its Augustus, Gustavus III., lived, it is probable from his taste influencing the nation, that the art and its professors would now have been in a very flourishing condition. At present, the state of politics withdraws the attention, not only of his majesty, but also of the nobility, from the arts: and the circumstances of the war so drain the country of money, that no encouragement is given to any of the practitioners: and indeed the talents of the youth for the pencil seem so small, that I confess I should be glad to see the forms of the academy thinned, and the students more usefully employed in thickening the battalions of their intrepid sovereign.

This latter is but an epitome of the conversation of the times: begin on what subject we will, it always ends with war. A theme, not a little stripped of its *glittering circumstance*, since it brought disasters worse than the roar of cannon upon your wandering friend.

LETTER XLV.

Stockholm, April, 1808.

YESTERDAY being the anniversary of the establishment of the order of the seraphim, all the knights of every order attended, dressed in their appropriate insignia. The habiliments of the Swedes, on these occasions, are very picturesque, being, as I before noticed, Spanish habits; a style first used in this country by the late king.

The uniform of the knights of the sword is a light blue, with white lace; that of the vasa knights, is green; that of the polar star, crimson velvet, &c. The knights of the seraphim wear white, with black lace, and black mantles. They were all collared and starred, and adorned with their respective chivalric distinctions.

The ceremony took place in the chapel of the palace, which was richly hung with blue and crimson velvet, profusely embroidered with gold, designating the arms of Sweden in a hundred compartments, surrounded by thousands of martial trophies. The throne stood on the right of the altar. It was velvet, of the same colours; and a massive silver chair, elevated on several steps, was the monarch's seat. Around hung the banners of all the knights. On the left of the altar were placed chairs of state (Banquo like) for the different sovereigns who belonged to the institution.

When I first entered, I saw the banner of Russia. But, a few minutes before the entrance of the king and the brethren of the seraphim, two heralds, attired in the robes of their office, advanced to the imperial banner, took it down from where it hung, and bore it out of the chapel. The invasion of Finland was his majesty's reason for this, and to show that none can remain a knight of the seraphim who takes up arms against its head. Many who deem orders as a mere interchange of trinkets, may think this action savours too much of the chivalrous age so long gone by! and, that it is gone by, the more the pity. It was the era of unblemished honour; when a man's word

bound stronger than oaths of the present period; and when the insignia of valour and virtue were prized beyond the wealth of worlds. To laugh at the titles and customs of honour, is to laugh at honour itself; and both, except in the best minds, fall into contempt together. I remember, and I blush for Englishmen while I write it, many in our island turning the chivalric distinctions of our immortal Nelson into ridicule. They have jested on his crosses and his stars, when, had they looked deeper, they would have seen wounds under every ornament, received in making his breast the shield of their safety. This absurb contempt, or baser envy, is beyond my understanding. So; I shall return to the brethren of the seraphim.

When the king entered the chapel, he was dressed in the robes of the order, and followed by a procession of knights, various officers of his staff, &c. The armour cased drabants were marshalled on each side of the building. His majesty bowed to all with the most affable grace, and took his seat on the throne. An anthem was played. The holy service was entered upon: and a divine read from the pulpit a sermon addressed to the body, relative to patriotism, respect for their order, and the indispensable duties annexed to it, of loyalty and valour in the defence of their country, being particularly demanded at this period.

As soon as this discourse, with numerous prayers, were finished, in all of which the king (who I understand is eminently pious), seemed most religiously to take part; the ceremony of creating a new knight began. His royal master read aloud the vow, to which the noviciate, standing between his sponsors, bowed assent. He then approached the king, knelt down before him, and was invested by the hands of his sovereign with the collar of the order; the amiable Gustavus adjusting it with all the attentive suavity of a familiar friend, during which time he continued talking to him in a low voice. He then took the sword of ceremony, and most gracefully, with his chivalric seal, stamped him knight. On this being performed, he embraced him; and count H—— (the new chevalier) kissed his majesty's hand twice, with a sensibility and enthusiasm that did honour to his heart; and the noble Gusta-

vus, by pressing most fervently in both his hands that of his faithful subject, and at the same time saying something, which, from the sweet and benign expression of his face, seemed full of graciousness, proved the tender sympathy with which he received the affections of his people.

The knightly brethren of the count next embraced him. Those prayers were then said, and the benediction given. The king rose, and the procession returned as they entered; his majesty having first bowed to the queen, who sat as a spectator, and next to the ambassadors and nobles of foreign nations. As I sat by our own minister, I had one of the best places in the chapel for commanding a view of the scene. It commenced at eleven in the morning, and was over at two o'clock, when a magnificent dinner was served in the palace for all the knights present; of which his majesty graciously partook, rather as a brother of the various orders, than as a sovereign prince.

The order of the seraphim was instituted so far back as the fourteenth century, by Magnus, king of Sweden, and has been held in the highest honour ever since. Margaret de Valdemar the daughter-in-law of its founder, bestowed it on none but her favoured nobles; and her successors in Sweden have spread its generous bonds even to crowned heads. The institution of an after queen, the romantic daughter of Gustavus Adolphus, arrived not to so brilliant a maturity, but, like its mistress, shed its proudest honours even in the blowing. However, as I am going to tell you a little more on this subject, I beg you will be attentive; and as this letter is altogether a record of chivalry, of ladies fair, and knights and scarfs, and pennons bright, I hope that you at least opened it in style, with a pair of perfumed gloves on!

Having been already, with all serious rites, admitted a knight of Mars; my next honour of the sort, was to issue from a gayer court. The star of the beauteous queen-Christina, the guide of love, and the order of the amaranth, the emblem of its never dying brightness, was to enlist me for ever one of beauty's vassals. Accordingly, a little time ago, at the hour appointed, I went to the *hall of installation;* and after going through the usual ceremonies of knighthood, taking the delightful vow of being

on all occasions the defender of loveliness in distress, the sword of consecration fell on my shoulders, the Count de la Gardé proclaimed me Champion of the Fair! and, still on my knees, the hands of a beauteous lady, the representative of queen Christina, fastened the shining badge upon my breast; and I rose, another leaf in the royal wreath of amaranth.

This institution, in the reign of its foundress, was supported by her with great pomp: but since then, as the more martial orders have arisen, it is only considered as *un ordre de galanterie;* an occasion for social meetings; balls and festivals being fixed at particular periods, which are numerously attended by the ladies and chevaliers of the order; all of whom are of the first rank and respectability, uniting the exhilaration of pleasure with the sweets of innocence. If any think harm of this, I reply in the true knightly style, *honi soit qui mal y pense!* That no sour commentaries will be made by you on the votaries of so sweet a flower, is the belief of your ever faithful friend.

LETTER XLVI.

Stockolm, April, 1808.

I HAVE passed this day delightfully; not with the living, but musing on the illustrious dead. The scene of my meditations was the arsenal. It stands in the king's garden, and contains, like our tower, the martial remains of ancient days; with more modern trophies, naval and military, taken in Swedish victories.

A range of equestrian figures, clothed in steel, and their horses barbed, present themselves on your entrance. The names of the kings of Sweden are written in succession on their pedestals; but I doubt whether any of the armour, excepting two or three of the later suits, ever protected a royal breast from the arrow of the crossbow, or the ball of a carbine. Innumerable heaps of swords, pistols, and old matchlock pieces, are piled around, without either taste or care.

The whole of the armour (saving a few shirts of mail,) seems not earlier than the fifteenth century; and what are of more modern date, appear to have been rather suits for tournaments than war. The head of one of these equestrian effigies is cased in a close helmet of an extraordinary shape: indeed I had never seen a similar one before. The visor is in the form of a face, excellently well executed, and polished very brightly. It has the addition of stiff mustachios and projecting eyes, which altogether make up a most terrific visage. Whether this iron mask be a portrait of any Swedish sovereign, I could not learn; but it possesses the strong national character.

In another apartment are deposited a collection of saddles (presents from different potentates,) accompanied by rich housings studded profusely with precious stones interwoven with silk, gold, silver, and pearls. I was shown a pair of spurs of the oldest fashion extant; the iron being pointed, without a rowel, and of a length exceeding any original or drawing I ever saw. Eleven inches is its length from the part which clasps the heel.

The fork is very long, and must reach inconveniently low on the foot. The leather is fastened to it by a buckle.

After running over a hundred, to me, uninteresting things, a case was opened containing the clothes worn by Charles the Twelfth on the day which deprived that hero of his life, and the world of many acts of eccentric greatness. Even his shirt is preserved as a sacred relic. I could not help feeling an emotion they only know who possess a little chivalric enthusiasm; a certain something the quieter part of the world often impute to romantic folly, when I drew on my hand the very glove which had covered his, and was profusely stained with his blood. On his being struck by the fatal ball on the temple, he clapped his right hand upon the part, which in a moment becoming encrimsoned with the dreadful proofs of his fate, he almost in the same instant seized the hilt of his sword, the belt of which also bears the bloody marks of this momentary impulse. The hole made by the bullet is in the hat; which, as well as the rest of the dress, appears to have been long the companion of his person. The pictures and prints of this renowned king present the *fac similes* of those habiliments. In the same case is preserved the cap he wore on the terrible day at Bender, when he so desperately defended himself against the Turks. It is of fur; and has one tremendous cut on the side, which must have been within a hair's breadth of there ending the career of this wonderful man.

The dress of his brother-in-law and successor is also shown; and several other habits, all belonging to different personages of the successive royal families. One suit is rather prematurely exhibited: and every one who knows the merits of its owner, must wish its admission long to continue out of place. It is the shirt and jacket of a royal duke still alive. They have sustained a war rent on one of the shoulders, I believe it happened in the battle of the galleys. I have no doubt these memorials of his gallantry were deposited here without the knowledge of the brave prince to whom they belonged. His good sense is equal to his courage; and while he lives to achieve future honours for Sweden, he will never sanction the hanging up of an old suit of uniform amongst the mailed coats of departed heroes.

One strange article to be treasured with the relics of war, is a carriage that was built in England in the reign of Elizabeth; being the first close vehicle of the sort ever seen in Sweden. It was brought from London by prince John, the second son of Gustavus Vasa, when he returned from his unsuccessful embassy to proffer to the virgin queen of that court the matrimonial proposals of his eldest brother.

Before I left this interesting place, I requested once more to see the relics of Charles the Twelfth. As I again held them in my hands, and pressed his blood stained glove to my lips, I could not help at the same instant recalling those of his rival Peter, kept with similar care in the imperial museum at St. Petersburgh. How different the two characters, yet how great both! The king of Sweden, kept without education by the ambition of his grandmother, without counsellors, or companions worthy of his dignity, drew from his own mind those principles of invincible courage, immaculate honour, and immutability in friendship, which stampt him the first of heroes. Who can forget the noble interruption with which this young and neglected prince broke up the deliberations of the senate, when meditating a humiliating negotiation with the enemies of the kingdom?—"Cease, gentlemen! my resolution is fixed. I will never enter into an unjust war; and I am resolved not to terminate a just one but by the destruction of the aggressor." With these magnanimous words he not only led the senate forth, but all the kingdom, wondering at this extraordinary justice and courage in a boy; and following him in crowds to the shores of Denmark, the ally of Russia, and the oppressor of his brother-in-law, the young duke of Holstein.

Then succeeded his victories; all gained by a bravery never excelled, and a military judgment that made veterans stand by in admiration. Having humbled Denmark, then came the tzar's hostilities. Though engaging by three ambassadors at Stockholm to maintain the peace, he marched at the head of a hundred thousand men into Livonia. Charles, who valued himself upon his severe probity, when he was first told the circumstance, would not credit the fact. He could not comprehend how a legislator like the tzar could make light of the sacred bonds

of men as well as of nations. Full of truth himself, he did not believe there could be a morality for princes different from that of private men.

The battle of Narva was a wonder in the page of history that never has been equalled. Nearly a hundred thousand troops laid down their arms to eight thousand! But what is still more wonderful, was the moderation of the young victor, who modestly drew his pen through the accounts which spoke highly of him, and depreciated the character of his great enemy. As justice led him forward, mercy was the companion of his arms. No outrage was committed by his soldiers; all obeyed his word at a moment, and it was ever to spare the conquered. Though an anchorite in pleasure, whether it came in the shape of love, or of any gratification of the senses, he was yet alive to all the tendernesses of fraternal affection, all the sympathies of friendship. I need only repeat one instance to show the sensibility of the young monarch in the most amiable light.

It was at the battle of Clissau, when Charles, at the head of twelve thousand men, opposed Augustus, king of Poland, with double the number. Upon the first volley of artillery from the Saxon side, the duke of Holstein, a brave prince, who had married the king of Sweden's sister, received a cannon ball through the body. Charles, on seeing him fall, inquired of an officer next to him, if the duke was dead, and being answered yes, a terrible paleness overspread his countenance, tears gushed from his eyes, and covering for a few moments his face with his hands, he suddenly struck his spurs into his horse, and rushed full speed into the thickest of the enemy.

In the midst of Charles's triumphs, while Europe trembled before his arms, Sweden enjoyed all the blessings of a profound peace. Feared and respected by its neighbours, it derived all the advantages of conquest without its pains: for Charles with a few thousands overcame the millions opposed to him; and supported his troops neither by drawing from his own country, nor by the plunder of others, but with the provisions the people of every nation joyfully, because honourably paid, brought into his camp.

Thus discomfiting the mighty tzar of Russia, bringing the several potentates of Europe to acknowledge his superior power, defending the cause of the oppressed, and dispensing crowns to them he esteemed the most deserving, he went forward in the full career of his virtue and glory until the unhappy hour that Patkul was surrendered to his demands. He that was humane to all the world besides, was cruel to him alone. But let the curtain fall over the scene! There we lose the just and amiable Charles the Twelfth in an implacable tyrant. It was his first and his last act of enormity; but it was of the blackest dye; so deep, that, if we may judge of the heart of a man by his actions, he could not but feel the acutest remorse for having so barbarously immolated that unfortunate nobleman to his vowed revenge against the enemy of his father, and to show the proud Augustus and the great Peter, that he durst brave their indignation. Fatal rivalry of power, when the blood of a brave and honourable patriot was the victim!

Soon after this period Charles turned his steps to the Ukraine; a measure which has usually been stigmatised as a whim; I venture rather to suppose it was by the secret instigations of Mazeppa, who promised, by assisting him in that quarter, to wound the tzar in one of his most favourite parts. But here his evil genius met him, and for ever after adhered to his side. The day of Pultowa sealed, with his fate, the fame of Peter the Great. I cannot but repeat the words of one with whom Charles was manifestly no favourite, on this occasion. They show that real virtues command praise.

"It was on the 8th of July that this decisive battle was fought between the two most famous monarchs then in the world. Charles the Twelfth, illustrious by a course of nine years victories; the Tzar, by nine years of fatigue spent in training his troops to arms: the one, glorious for having given away dominions; the other, for having civilized his own: Charles, in love with danger, and fighting for glory only: Peter, making war for dominion, and his own interest. The Swedish monarch, liberal from greatness of soul; the Muscovite, never generous but for some private end. The one temperate and

chaste beyond example, naturally magnanimous, and never cruel but once: the other, harsh and sanguinary, terrible to his subjects, as wonderful to strangers, and addicted to excesses which shortened his days. Charles had the title of invincible; Peter, the appellation of Great."

That Peter was interested is true; but it was with the same spirit which animated our Elizabeth: the aggrandizement of his country was his passion, and to that object all other nations, as far as lay in his power, were sacrificed. To Russia he was the most generous of princes: he gave her his heart and his soul; he toiled for her in the dockyard, dug for her in the quarries; made himself in every thing a servant, that he might know to be a king in all.

Take but a retrospect of his career, and we must perceive that almost every act of his life tended to the benefit of his people. Even what is blameworthy in him arose from this principle; he steeped his hand in the blood of his subjects, to strike awe into the rest; and it was to obtain ports in the Baltic for the advantage of the merchants, that made him invade the king of Sweden's dominions. Great as he was, he knew not the sublime virtue which refuses to sanctify a good end, gained by ill measures. The civilization of Russia was his grand object; and all means he deemed admissible that bore on his favourite point. His very faults were suited to the people he governed, and the severity which made them tremble, compelled them to obey. Until the latest moment of his life, he manifested the watchful care of a father, even while the knout and the ax taught them to fear his wrath. In the midst of all this severity, which perhaps was necessary to bring so proud and barbarous a nation to observe his rules, we are struck with instances of the most amiable regard for the persons of his subjects. One, of most extraordinary benevolence, I cannot but recount, as it deprived the world of longer beholding this constellation of genius, and Russia of her glory and her parent. The circumstances of his death were related to me by an authority that cannot be disputed.

Towards the close of the life of this admirable man, he was afflicted with a painful malady which he chose to bear in silence,

not even mentioning it to the empress, or to his most confidential friends. The better to conceal it, he continued his usual active employments; but the anguish of the disorder at length grew to such a height, that he was obliged to seek relief; and he reposed his secret with a favourite *valet de chambre*, ordering him to procure assistance with the greatest secrecy. The man obeyed: but applying to one of his own relations, an ignorant quack, something was sent to the emperor which indeed gave him a transitory ease, but did the affected part so much injury, as to occasion the return of the pain with such augmented torture, that further concealment was impossible, and the best medical aid was summoned. Every care was now taken to cure the disease; and the tzar, at the end of four months, was able to leave his bed.

He regained strength so rapidly, as not only to venture into the open air, but imagining himself better than his physicians would allow him to be, one day, without their knowledge, he got on board his yacht to visit some works that were carrying forward on the Lago lake, under the directions of general Munich. Having remained there as long as he liked, he found the short voyage had so enlivened his spirits, and strengthened his enfeebled frame, that, instead of returning to St. Petersburgh, he sailed down the Neva to Lachta, a village on the gulf of Finland, situated on the coast, where he intended to land, and thence proceed to view the military manufactory at Sisterbach.

He was scarcely ashore before the weather became very bad (it was now November), the sea raged, and the wind rose to a tremendous tempest. At this moment he beheld, at some distance, a boat filled with soldiers, struggling with the waves, which each sweep of the beating surges threatened to dash in atoms against the rocks. A few minutes passed, and they were driven on the shoals not far from the village, every sea breaking over them with such terrific fury, that each watery mountain seemed the herald of their doom. His majesty sent a vessel to their assistance; but, notwithstanding his orders, he observed that the boat's crew remained in the same perilous situation, the pinnace seeming to make unavailing

efforts to reach them. Beholding the little exertions these sailors were making to save the unfortunate wretches already exhausted with terror and fatigue, he leaped into his own boat, and soon drew near them; but finding he was yet too far off, on account of the banks and rocks, he plunged into the sea, and swimming, speedily was amongst the sufferers. What a sight for them, who seemed to be abandoned by the men of their own quality, who saw the brethren of their own profession standing aloof from their danger, to see their sovereign, the emperor of all the Russias, risking his life for their perservation! Rising from the dashing waves which had several times closed over his head, and threatened to overwhelm him for ever, he sprung into the boat. The shout the despairing crew uttered was such as if an angel had descended amongst them. His presence and unremitted activity recalled the energies of every one: the boat was again in deep water; and his people saved by his brave assistance.

This humane and patriotic prince changed his clothes as soon as he regained the village. But, alas, notwithstanding the strictest care, the cold of the season, and his remaining so long in the water, together with the irritation and anxiety of his mind during the exertion, brought on a relapse of his disease, attended by a fever, and before he reached St. Petersburgh, his illness was increased to imminent danger.

On being carried into his palace, the emperor was laid on his couch, from which he never more arose. The first month of the year 1725 was the last of his earthly commission. His life ceased as it had begun and continued, a sacrifice for the good of his people! The setting of such a sun was worthy of its career; and we look after its glorious track with an enthusiasm that makes us turn to other sovereigns, and exclaim, *behold this godlike prince! go ye and do likewise!*

In every vicissitude of his reign, whether in peace or in war; whether encountering domestic trials, or stemming the prejudices of a haughty nobility; in all he was the impartial patriot, the resolute dictator.

It has often been said, "what a treasure he would have been to an enlightened nation!" That is a query. A monarch, acting

on his principles, and blessed with a gentle nature adapted to the tempers of a polished people, would indeed be invaluable; but I doubt whether the peculiar disposition of the tzar would have acquired him his present reputation in any other country. He was perfectly suited by Providence, by greatness of mind, temper, austere decision, and inflexible resolution, to govern, educate, and aggrandize, a vast and barbarous people, and to leave them to after ages, a brightening monument of himself for ever. Lycurgus was the lawgiver of one small republic, Solon of a single city, but Peter was the legislator of an empire that spreads over half the globe.

Different as their natures, different as were their pursuits, have been the fame of the tzar and of his rival Charles; and as different were the modes of their death. The king of Sweden was killed before Frederickshall, in a manner that strongly gave rise to a supposition of treachery which after evidence has confirmed.

On the night of St. Andrew's day, it being the depth of winter, as was his custom, he went about nine o'clock to inspect the trenches. Megret, the French engineer who conducted the siege, accompanied him, attended by several other officers. Not finding the parallel sufficiently advanced, he spoke with some displeasure to the engineer, but Megret replying that the place would be taken in eight days, the king replied *we shall see*, and stooping down, examined the works by the light of the stars; he then rose from his bending posture, but still continued looking into the trenches. Almost immediately afterwards a shot was fired, the king was seen to put his hand to his forehead—to his sword—and fall. A deep sigh was all he uttered, and his mighty spirit fled! Such was the termination of the life of Charles the Twelfth; a man whom all the world feared, whom all the world admired; whom all who venerate virtue, and can perceive in the most godlike man the alloy of mortality, must love, pity, and deplore!

His officers presently surrounded him. Monsieur Siquier, his aide-de-camp, raised his head from the parapet, but he was quite dead. At this sight Megret, the chief engineer, and who,

no doubt, was concerned in the murder, and had led his master to the spot, coldly said, "The play is over, let us to supper!" It was settled that the melancholy event should be concealed until the prince of Hesse's commands should be known. The dead Charles was accordingly covered with a cloak, and carried through the ranks of his adoring soldiers as a wounded officer. The prince of Hesse (the husband of the deceased king's only surviving sister), gave instant orders that none should stir from the camp till his wife was declared queen of Sweden, to the prejudice of the young duke of Holstein, the son of Charles's favourite sister and beloved friend, both no more. These commands were obeyed. The princess was proclaimed, her husband shortly after; and baron Gortz, the faithful minister of Charles, and the guardian of the young duke, executed under the gallows. Eloquent as these measures were of treachery, the assassination was not fully ascertained till many years afterwards, when one Cronsted, an officer, on his death bed, confessed that he had himself, at the instigation of the prince of Hesse, fired the gun that killed Charles the Twelfth.

I need not, to you, comment on this horrible parricide. It was not the mistaken zeal of a Brutus, which shuddered while it struck the blow, but the arm of a base mercenary that rifled the hero of his life, and a brave nation of its newly recovered and adored leader. Many a noble heart has visited the place where he fell; but who would repeat over it, the words which he uttered at Lutzen, the spot hallowed by the last breath of his predecessor, the great Gustavus Adolphus? "I have endeavoured to live like thee: *may God grant me as glorious a death!*"

Charles was not so favoured: Gustavus, like Hector, died in the heat of battle, by the sword of a hero; Charles, like Achilles, met his fate in a still hour, from an ignoble hand. His life was splendid, but his death! who will envy it? It was not in the bed of honour, but by the bolt of an assassin. For one dagger that rids the world of a tyrant, a dozen bereaves it of the rulers it most values. Witness, even in modern annals, Henry of France, Charles of Sweden, and the yet lamented Gustavus IV.

Before I close with my illustrious subject, I must give you a truer idea of his person than the prints do which you see in England. Charles was of a fine height, nobly shaped; and notwithstanding his uncouch garments, tradition speaks of him as very graceful in his movements: but it was an heroic grace, active and commanding; nothing that spoke of the dancing-master nor drill sergeant. He had a broad, high forehead, large blue eyes beaming mildness, but in battle blazing with fire. His nose was finely proportioned, and his mouth ever parted with a smile. In fact, so gay was his disposition, notwithstanding his abandonment of all the pleasures which rank themselves under that title, that he frequently laughed in the most serious debates; and shrugged his shoulders, and smiled, under the severest misfortunes. There was no calamity of sufficient weight, he thought, to rob a man of his cheerfulness; and whether pending or fallen, still he smiled, still he hoped, still he was happy!

Mad as this king might be called, he was a practical philosopher: and had his judgment on life but half equalled the powers he possessed to adorn it, his days had been lengthened, his reign had continued and terminated in glory, and Frederickshall been guiltless of the blood of Charles the Twelfth.

I have told you before, that the person of the present king greatly resembles his illustrious progenitor, and the similitude reaches even to the mind. We see the same bravery, the same virtue, the same steadiness. But there, may the likeness cease! May loyalty always guard that monarch, who knows so well to defend his own honour, and to preserve the freedom of a country which has ever been the birthplace of heroes!

You, who love the truly great far and near, will fervently join in this prayer of your faithful friend.

LETTER XLVII.

Stockholm, May, 1808.

THIS delightful month was hailed on its first morn as it is in Russia, by merrymakings that reach from the court to the cottage: all the carriages in Stockholm paraded in procession backwards and forwards through a park not far distant from the town.

Much beauty was present in the equipages; and not a little amongst the pedestrians of humbler ranks, who flocked in crowds to see the cavalcade. But fair as the ladies were, yet the splendor of the scene was far inferior to that I had shared in its anniversaries of the two years before; and for loveliness, you will not wonder that I should, in that point also, find it halt behind dear Mosco, and its dearer inhabitants.

This custom is a very odd one; but perhaps it was instituted on a similar political principle to that of Russia: if so, the pleasure may have succeeded, though not the profit; for certainly the carriage-building trade has stood still these sixty years. The other festivities, in both countries, (nay, we still have them in the remoter countries of England,) I make no doubt originated in festivals dedicated to the floral deity of the pagan ages. The May garlands; the goat dressed in flowers, and led about by husbandmen in white, are sufficient proofs of their heathen origin.

Her majesty, as well as the other branches of the royal family, were in the string of carriages. She looked charmingly in the splendid attire she had adopted to hail the season, so sweet an emblem of herself; but her graces are of too fine a texture to bear the encumbrance of much ornament: to use the threadbare quotation (because it speaks truth of her,)

> "Thoughtless of beauty, she is beauty's self;
> And is, when unadorned, adorned the most!"

Near this city is an extremely pretty spot, charmingly diversified with rocks, wood, and water. Here stands Haga, an elegant small mansion, built in the English taste. It is now the favourite retreat of the present king; and the situation was so admired by his august father, that, a short time prior to his death, he commenced building a superb palace on the grounds. When he fell, the plan was dropped; and the comparative cottage remains as the royal residence. The gardens of this minor palace, like those of Kensington with us, are open to the inhabitants of Stockholm; and on Sundays they generally drive thither, and in various gay groups *promenade* for hours.

The grounds are so romantically disposed, as to suit all fancies: some parts are open lawn, and bright terraces; others, deeply secluded shades, where you may walk from morn to eve without meeting a soul. As sauntering through pure air has ever been one of my greatest pleasures, and Haga being only an English mile and a half from the town, I used to go thither many days in the week, when I had all the groves to myself; and often, strolling about with my book in my hand, I have met the fair majesty of Sweden with one of her children, enjoying, as myself, the sweet day, without any guards but her own innocence and dignity. It was then I saw her all lovely in a simple attire, and looking in motion and tender graces the very perfection of female kind.

The departure of the snow has most wonderfully changed the appearance of all around. What was white and cheerless winter a few weeks ago, is now green and smiling spring; the trees are bursting into leaf, the birds sing, and the people have already assumed their summer garments. Bear skins, and the furry hides of other animals, have dropped from the backs of the inhabitants, and when seen in lighter garbs, the former appellations with which we were so apt to compliment them, of Goths and Vandals, never enter our heads. Hence we see, though there be some wit in leaving nature unadorned, there is none in rendering her hideous by loads of ugly clothes. So little do people in general understand this distinction, that I have heard a man reply to a dowdy woman's apology for a dirty dis-

habille, by quoting the very words I have so *royally*, and surely, properly applied.

The streets of Stockholm, now exhibit an apparently quite different race from its former shaggy natives; and with the addition of the military, look very gay.

Since the Russian troops passed the frontiers on the Finland side, the Swedes have gradually fallen back; and several gallant acts have been performed by the little army concentrated under general Klingspor. The gulf of Bothnia being frozen by the severity of the late season, the invading troops spread themselves over the islands. A considerable body of Cossacs and infantry took possession of Aland: you will remember that I mentioned this island as the largest of the *precious* covey, and the nearest to the coast of Sweden. Here was the scene of the brave pastor's prowess.

The inhabitants, after enduring all the anguish of the bitterest oppression from the Cossacs, eagerly followed the standard held out to them by their spiritual leader; and headed by a dauntless peasant of their own island, they laid the plan for its recovery. He went, as a first measure, to Gripsholm, and brought secretly into the island arms and ammunition. Then prudently awaiting the opening of the waters, that they might have the enemy hemmed in, hopeless of succour, nothing was suspected till the blow was struck. At the appointed moment the attack was made, and an obstinate resistance opposed on the part of the Russians. Several fell on both sides: but the undaunted courage of men fighting for their homes and families prevailed; and the imperial troops, commanded by a field officer, were taken prisoners.

They were immediately, to the number of two hundred and fifty, transported in boats to the main land; whence their brave captors led them in triumph to Stockholm.

The gallant peasant, who had ventured his life to obtain the supplies, and who had led the attack, entered the capital on the eleventh of May, like Cincinnatus, at the head of his conquering legions. His majesty received him on the royal parade, which was filled with the guards, and an immense concourse of people. Before them all, the king took from his own breast the medal-

lion of the order of the sword, which hung there by a ribbon, and putting it over the neck of the loyal islander, said: "My sense of your bravery can only be equalled by the united gratitude of Sweden. May your countrymen, while admiring such virtue in so humble an individual, make it their model! And while you see nobles following your example, remember, that when occasions demand, new acts of loyalty and courage will be expected from so brave a man!"

The poor fellow was so overcome by his majesty's condescension, that he burst into tears; and an officer who stood close to the king, told me, that the amiable Gustavus exhibited similar feelings on seeing the sensibility of the honest soul, and taking him warmly by the hand, "God bless you!" said he; "go my brave fellow, secure of your sovereign's esteem; go, and be respected by your native islanders!"

Besides these honours, a handsome gratuity was given to him; and rewards, with general thanks, distributed amongst his brave associates. All were anxious to express their admiration of the valiant group, and they marched from Stockholm with their happy leader, full of delight, and laden with presents. The field-officer this little army took prisoner, had served during the whole of the late campaign on the banks of the Vistula; and there acquired a fame which rendered his present capture doubly mortifying. But he had this consolation (and it is ever sufficient with a man of honour); that he maintained his ground while it was possible to preserve his men from instant destruction: and when he did yield his sword, it was, although to peasants, to men who fought, each with the determination of a hero.

As I am preparing to quit Stockholm, and have so many farewels to say before my departure, you will not be surprised, and perhaps you will not be sorry, that instead of running you forward to another subject, I leave you on the march with the brave Alanders. As long as you drop them short of the isles of Bothnia, very well, both for your own sake, and that of your faithful friend.

LETTER XLVIII.

Gottenburg, June, 1808.

ON the fifth of June, after having been honoured the day before with a most hospitable dinner from his excellency our good minister, and my kind friend Mr. Thornton, I set off from Stockholm at nine in the morning, accompanied by a gentleman lately arrived from St. Petersburgh.

We had previously purchased a small Swedish carriage that precisely held two persons, for which I paid fifty dollars; and having sent our *forbode* forward, we had no difficulty in getting horses. At two o'clock the following day, we arrived at Arboga; having passed through an extremely wild country. Were it not for the extensive woods which sometimes enveloped us for many miles, I should have declared that the stony deserts of Arabia could not be more stupendous and barren than parts of this province. I never saw, even in Finland, such immense tracks of granite; and in some places they stood so huge and scattered, as to seem, at a little distance, the ruins of vast fortresses, or towns and churches.

Arboga is of considerable extent; and is situated at the extremity of the lake Hejelmoren: it is clean and regularly built; and appears, like Sala, the residence of prosperity and comfort. A large castle stands near the bridge: it is surrounded by a wet ditch. On a part of the ancient walls is now erected a modern house, which may be a convenience to the possessor, but it is the most detestable blemish that could be devised to destroy the otherwise grand effect of this noble fortress. I visited the church, a building of extensive dimensions, but neither very old, nor very interesting. Nothing else in the town being worthy of notice, without further delay we set forward, and again entered avenues of trees most delightfully shading us from the now fervent heat of the sun, and the burning dust that usually attends his chariot wheels.

These woods consist of lofty and umbrageous trees; a beauty

which we seldom see in England, except in parks, as the passion for lopping turns all our British avenues into pollards rank and file. The Swedish roads, as they are more refreshing aloft, so they are pleasanter below, than even the famed ones of our country; for the peasantry are not only obliged to keep them in repair, but they do it with zeal and conscience.

Nothing particularly interesting in towns or villages attracted our attention, till we approached the mountains whose echoes announce the cataracts of Trolhæta. On arriving at the foot of one of these rocky heights, the road changes its quality, and becomes gradually worse and worse, until it is literally nothing more than a naked bed of granite, worn into a sort of track by the constant journeyings of travellers to the falls. Here the character nature assumes differs little from the romantic wilds of Derbyshire.

Trolhæta lies about a Swedish mile out of the post road; and at some distance we could hear the roar of the waters, as well as see the misty foam that rose like white smoke midway up their rocky barriers. We found an excellent inn; and after taking a little refreshment, set forth to have a nearer view of these celebrated productions of nature and art. We were attended by a very intelligent man, who was to be our guide to the scene. There are six falls at short distances from each other. They are produced by the waters of the Wener lake; and pouring from stupendous precipices into their rocky beds, produce effects of such sublimity that pen and pencil fail under the description. The torrents rush with resistless force from the heights, carrying along felled bodies of trees in their passage, and dashing from steep to steep of the huge masses of granite, roll downward foaming and bellowing into the abyss beneath; whence they rebound again in raging waves, and a snowy mist that covers the whole of the banks around with streaming water. The bold rocks on each side, finely varied with trees and shrubs, which partially cover the gray face of the stone, and the pretty cottages of the rustics bending over the flood, are to the highest degree picturesque. I have attempted a sketch of the scene, where you may descry the wooded tops of several little

islands, which, owing to the horrors of the cataracts that surround them, have never been trodden by the foot of man.

The works of art which have been invented to bring the boats down from the smooth water near the lake Wener, to these more dangerous passages, are beautiful in themselves, and highly honourable to the sovereigns who patronized the design, and to the genius that conceived it. These works were begun during the reign of Charles the Twelfth, and finished in 1800, under Gustavus IV.

The road from Trolhæta to Gottenburg is continually varying its scenery; and certainly is, by far, the most beautiful in this part of the kingdom. Woods, mountainous defiles, and the rapid stream of the Gotha, are our alternate companions all the way. About nine miles distant from a place called Lahal, on the opposite banks of the river, on a high and commanding rock, appear the ruins of the ancient fortress of Hohus. At its foot is a small town of that name. Its romantic situation, thus under the shelter of the castle, which stands like a proud giant braving the storms, and the black mountains of granite in its rear, stretching far, and lifting their heads to the clouds, form a scene of Gothic grandeur in ruins that might afford a subject, not only for the painter's pencil, but the poet's pen.

The city of Gottenburgh (or more properly Gothaburgh), lies in a hollow on the conflux of the rivers Gotha and Moldal. The heights which surround so command the town, that, in case of an enemy possessing himself of these advantageous positions, the present fortifications would be useless. One or two block houses have been constructed to endeavour at a sort of protection, as well as to annoy the enemy, were he to make himself master of the city. The inutility of the works which encircle Gottenburgh, having at length been discovered, they are now demolishing; to give place to a new plan, which, it is supposed, will remedy the old defects.

The aspect of the city is much like the towns in Holland: and that is not surprising, for Charles IX., who founded the place in 1607, planted a Dutch colony here; and, to increase its trade and prosperity, allowed them certain privileges from the

crown, which, I believe, are still continued to the citizens. A few years after its establishment, the town was burnt down by a king of Denmark: but Gustavus Adolphus, rebuilding it with greater advantages, put the original settlers within its new walls; and ever since it has been in a very flourishing condition.

The harbour is between chains of picturesque rocks, is about two furlongs wide, and is considered the most commodious in the kingdom. Indeed the mouth of the river presents a bay sufficiently extensive to contain the largest ships, and securely shelters them from the severest storms. At present a most happy sight for Sweden, and as proud a one for us English on the shore, gives additional magnificence to the haven. The British transports and ships of war, headed by the *Victory!* that best monument to the memory of the glorious hero who breathed out his soul beneath its decks, amid the thunders of war, and the shouts of victory, fulfilling, with the last pulse of his valiant heart, the order he had given, that *every man should do his duty*.

Not to be an idle spectator of the disembarking of our troops, did I come to Gottenburgh. You know the private, as well as you feel the public reasons, which cause me to enter on immediate service. I have made my arrangements to be ready at a moment's summons, to attend the British arms either to Norway or to Zealand; and, I trust that our brave leader will soon send home a good account of the enemy. My next letter will probably be either from an encampment amongst the Norwegian hills, or from on board a transport bound for the shores of Denmark. Here, or there, ever while above ground (and beneath it too, witness the mines!) I remain your faithful friend.

LETTER XLIX.

Gottenburgh, July, 1808.

TO me all the world seems asleep, or engaged in mysteries in which I am to be no partaker. It is not sufficient that I am perplexed by political suspenses, but private anxieties are to add to my disagreeables. Why are you all so silent? Perhaps you will say, that owing to the information of my last, you did not write, because you expected I would now be on the wing, and letters might not readily reach me! Being good enough to make your apology for a first transgression of the sort, I shall proceed to my other disappointments.

A suspense of nearly two months did not decide the destination of the British troops. Negotiations, and various other occurrences, all a riddle to us poor bystanders, suddenly unfurled the English canvass, and the whole fleet, with its brave freight, were again under way for Great Britain! Sir John Moore had left Gottenburgh for Stockholm on the fourteenth of June, and returned hither *incognito* on the first of July; he went immediately on board the Victory, and he and the whole fleet sailed for England, on the fourth.

These events have struck a general consternation into all people. The mystery seems to threaten an unhappy disclosure; and where we before saw smiling faces, we now meet gloom and suspicion. My northern campaign being thus cropt in the bud, I shall hope for a more propitious commencement on the shores of Spain, which, I understand, is now the destination of the Victory and her squadron. I was on board a transport for some time, but being told they were going direct for the Spanish coast, I relanded; rather wishing to make England in my way, and to join the British troops when disembarked at their foreign destination.

Since their departure my chagrin has been a little dispersed by the arrival of their royal highnesses the duke and dutchess d'Angoulême. They came hither from Prussia, accompanied by the queen of France and their suite; and mean to remain

till preparations are made to receive them in England. I was immediately presented by the *Comte de Damas*. These interesting remains of the once splendid court of Versailles affected me much. I was received with affability and dignity; but as the interview was not a short one, the cold formalities of ceremony were most condescendingly waived by these august personages, (not the less royally great, in being heroically so, under misfortune:) the illustrious wife of Louis XVIII. conversed with cheerfulness and freedom; and the duke talked with me on every popular subject, in the most engaging manner. The dutchess, the lovely daughter of the beautiful and unhappy Antoinette, is extremely interesting. She is fair, and very like the Bourbons. Her eyes are mild; and, in their slow and gentle turns, carry such an expression of tender melancholy, that it is impossible to look on her without partaking her feelings. Her whole air breathes the same sentiments; the very tones of her voice, all tell of the woes she has suffered; that she is the daughter, the last of the offspring of the murdered king and queen of France.

As I frequently repeated my visit by the desire of his royal highness, I saw this interesting princess in a thousand charming lights, and perceived, that though she was sad, she was not gloomy; that her melancholy was of a temper rather to endear than to distress: and it seems to have had its full effect upon her amiable husband. She conversed with me as he did, making me sit by them as a friend; and during these conferences with which they honoured me, I had every opportunity of appreciating the value of her really fine understanding and angelic heart. Cruel as has been her lot, she has found *sweet are the uses of adversity;* for in no rank of life did I ever meet with more intelligence, sound judgment, and dignified piety, than in the dutchess d'Angoulême.

The duke is in every respect worthy of so inestimable a treasure. His mind is as excellent as it is amiable; and while I took from him the commands with which he honoured me for England, I was happy thus to unite my respect for the prince, with the devoted affection of a friend.

I have just received a most flattering invitation from the Swedish commander in chief on the frontiers of Norway, to join him there, where every attention will be shown me, and my military passion fully gratified: but my duty calls me to the Spanish shores; I have declined the honour with gratitude; and to-morrow I sail for England! May heaven's propitious gales soon bring to the bosom of his family, their, and your, ever faithful friend!

LETTER L.

Harwich, August, 1808.

AFTER an exactly three years' absence, I again revisit my native country! I am just landed. In twenty-four hours, before you and the dear circle have read through these tidings, please God, all I love in England will be clasped in the arms of your friend.

FINIS.

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